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THE
WILLOW TREE
AND
OTHER STORIES.

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS.

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THE HANS ANDERSEN
STORY BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG.

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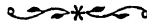
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CONTENTS.



	PAGE
UNDER THE WILLOW TREE	285
THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA	314
THE SHEPHERDESS AND THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER	316
THE TINDER BOX	325
ELDER TREE MOTHER	337
THE SWAN'S NEST	350
HOLGER DANSKE	353
A HEARTFELT SORROW	362
IN YEARS TO COME.	366
THUMBÉLINA	370
EVERYTHING IN ITS RIGHT PLACE	388
THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL	404







Under the Willow-Tree.

THE little town of Kjoge, in Zealand, lies close to the sea: it is a bleak and barren place; open fields stretch round it, and the green forest is far away. The sea is

always beautiful, but even the sea might be more beautiful than it is here; and yet, when one calls a place home, there is always something about it which has power to waken loving, regretful longing, even among the most beautiful scenery in the world. And it must be allowed that it is rather pretty in the summer-time on the outskirts of the little town: a few poor gardens line the margin of the leaping brook that hurries on to pour itself into the sea. The two little children who were fighting bravely through the hedge of gooseberry bushes to reach each other, thought it was a beautiful place; especially under the old willow-tree. There was an elder-tree in one of their gardens, and a willow-tree in the other; they loved the willow best, though it grew so near the water-side, and they might easily have fallen in. But God's eyes watch over the little ones, or else it would be a poor look-out for them. They were, however, very careful; indeed, the boy was so frightened at water, that no one could ever persuade him to go near the sea—not even in the summer, when all the other children were paddling among the waves. He was finely teased about it, and he had to bear that patiently. One day, Joanna, the neighbour's

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE.

little girl, dreamed that she was sailing in a boat, and that Kanute waded out to her; so deep, that the water rose up to his neck, up to his hair, and then closed over him. From the moment when little Kanute heard this dream, he never let the other boys tease him any more; he dare go in the water, for had not Joanna dreamed it? He never really did go in, but the dream was the pride of his life.

The children's parents often met, and the children played together in the gardens, and in the avenue of willows that ran round the ramparts; the willows were not much to look at, with their wind-beaten, stunted boughs, but then they were planted for use and not for show. The old willow-tree in the garden was really lovely; and that was where the two children sat. In the town itself is a large market-place, and at the fair it was filled with booths and stalls, decked out with gay ribbons, boots, toys, and everything one can wish for. There was always a great crowd, and generally it rained heavily, so that the steam from the farmers' grey-frieze coats rose up in clouds and mixed with the delicious smell from the cakes and gingerbread-stalls. The best of all was, that the man who sold the cakes used to

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

lodge at Kanute's father's while the fair lasted; sometimes he would give the little lad a stray gingerbread or two, and then Joanna always got her share.

Better even than that—the old man could tell tales about everything under the sun, even about his own gingerbread; and one night he told the children a tale which made such a deep impression on them, that they never forgot it. Perhaps it will be as well that you should know it too, especially as it is short.

“On the counter of my shop,” said the old man, “there lay two gingerbread-cakes; one was in the shape of a man with a hat on his head, and the other was a young lady with no hat. They lay face upward, because that is the proper way to look at them—no one would think of looking at the wrong side of a gingerbread-cake. The man had a bitter almond on his left side—that was his heart; but the young lady was made of nothing but honey. They lay on the counter for samples, and they laid there so long that they fell in love with each other, but neither of them said so, and yet it is absolutely necessary to say so if anything is to come of it.

“‘He is a man—he must speak first,’ she

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE.

said ; ' I ask no more than to know that my



love is returned.'

“His thoughts were much bolder; that is always the way with men. He dreamed that he was a real street-boy with his pocket full of coppers, and that he bought the young lady and ate her up.

“Days and weeks passed by; they lay there silent on the counter; the young lady's thoughts grew softer and tenderer still. ‘It is enough for me,’ she sighed, ‘that I have lain on the same counter.’ And with that she broke right in two.

“‘If she had only known of my love she would have held out a little longer,’ he thought.

“That is the tale,” said the old man; “and here they are, both of them. They are remarkable because of their life-story, and because of their silent love that never came to anything. Here—you may have them.” He gave Joanna the young man, who was quite whole, and Kanute had the broken pieces of the young lady.

The children were so touched by the story that they could not find it in their hearts to eat the two lovers. The next day they went into the churchyard and sat down on the low stone wall, which is all overgrown with luxuriant ivy, winter and summer through.

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE.

They set up the cakes in the sunshine among the green leaves, and told the story to a group of children—told about the silent love that was no good to any one. All the children praised the story; but as they gazed at the gingerbread couple, a big boy made a dart at the young lady—quite on purpose—and ate her up. Kanute and Joanna cried bitterly, and then—most likely, so that the poor sweetheart should not be left all alone in the world—then they ate *him* up; but they never forgot the story.

The children were always together; sometimes under the elder tree, sometimes under the willow tree; and the little girl sang the prettiest songs, in a voice as clear as a bell. Kanute had not a note in his voice, but he knew the words, and that is something. The people in Kjöge, even the well-to-do woman who kept the fancy shop, used to stop and listen when Joanna sang. "The little maid has a pretty voice of her own," they used to say.

Those were happy days, but they could not last for ever. The neighbours had to separate; Joanna's mother died, and her father made up his mind to marry again. A good situation, as light porter, was offered to him in Copenhagen, and the day came for them all to part. Tears

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

were shed all round ; indeed, the children cried as if their hearts were breaking ; but the old people promised to write to each other at least once a year.

Kanute was bound apprentice to a shoemaker. He was a big boy now, and could not be allowed to be idle any longer. Then came his Confirmation day. Oh ! how he longed to be in Kopenhagen with little Joanna ! but he was obliged to stay in Kjöge. He had never been to Kopenhagen in his life, though it was only a few miles distant. When the sky was clear, he could see the church steeples quite plainly ; and on his Confirmation day he saw the golden cross on S. Mary's spire glitter in the sunshine. Oh ! how often he thought of Joanna ! Did she ever think of him, he wondered ? Yes ! Towards Christmas there came a letter for his parents from Joanna's father. They were getting on very well in Kopenhagen, and all their good fortune came from Joanna's wonderful voice. She had an engagement at the theatre, where all the plays were sung, the letter said ; and she earned a salary already. The dollar enclosed was for her old friends in Kjöge, as a Christmas box. They were to drink to her health. This last

sentence, Joanna had written with her own hand, and underneath came a postscript, "Remember me to Kanute." The whole family cried over it : there was nothing certainly to cry for, but their tears were tears of joy.

Joanna had been in Kanute's thoughts all day long, and now he knew she thought of him ; the nearer he was to being out of his time, the more clearly he saw that he loved her dearly, and that she must be his wife. Then a smile would cross his lips ; his thread flew faster, and his foot pressed firmly against the knee strap ; the awl would prick his finger till the blood came, but what did that signify ? He was not going to play the tongue-tied lover ; the gingerbread cake had been a lesson to him.

His 'prentice days were over now, and his knapsack filled. Now, for the first time in his life, he was to go to Kopenhagen, for he had found a place there. How surprised and overjoyed Joanna would be ! She was seventeen now, and he was nineteen.

He thought of buying a golden ring for her in Kjøge but he remembered that he could get such things much better in Kopenhagen ; so he bade his mother and father good-bye, and

late on a rainy autumn afternoon he turned his back on his native village, and set off towards the great town. The leaves were falling from the trees; he was wet through by the time he reached his new master's. The next Sunday he went out to visit Joanna's father. He put on his new hat and suit of clothes; they fitted him very well, and he had never worn a hat before. He found the house, and went up one pair of stairs after another; it was enough to turn any one giddy to see how the people lived, one room over another, high in the air.

It was a comfortable room, and Joanna's father received him very kindly; his wife was a stranger, but she held out her hand, and asked him to stay tea with them.

"Joanna will be glad to see you," said the father. "You have grown quite a fine young man. Now you shall see her—ah! she is the joy of my life. She has a room of her own, for which she pays us herself."

The man knocked at Joanna's door, just as if he were a stranger, and then they all went in. How elegant everything was! There certainly was no room like it in Kjöge: the queen herself could not have a pleasanter one, Kanute

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE.

thought. There were window curtains down to the very ground, and a carpet and a velvet chair; not to speak of flowers and pictures, and a great mirror as large as a door; one



felt almost afraid to enter. Kanute saw all this with one glance, and yet he seemed to see nothing but Joanna. She was grown up now, and very different from what Kanute re-

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

membered her. There was no maiden in Kjöge half so beautiful ; how ladylike she was, and how distantly she looked at Kanute !—only for a moment though, for then she rushed towards him as if she were going to embrace him. She did not do so, but it was very near it.

Yes, she was glad to see the friend of her childhood, and yet the tears came into her eyes : there was so much to hear and to tell ; she asked after Kanute's father and mother, and after the elder and the willow tree. "Mother elder" and "Father willow," she called them, as if they were alive, and they were almost as good. She remembered the gingerbread cakes too, and their silent love, and how they lay on the counter till they broke in two. She laughed heartily as she recalled the story, but the blood flamed high in Kanute's cheeks, and his heart beat loud and fast. No, she was not proud ! It was she herself—Kanute noticed that—who prompted her parents to ask him to stay ; she poured out his tea, and handed him his cup.

After tea she read something aloud out of a book, and it seemed to Kanute that all she read spoke of his love ; it chimed in so fully with his secret thoughts. Then she sang a simple

song, but when she sang it, it sounded like a story over which she poured out all her heart. Oh, yes! she loved Kanute. Tears rolled down his cheeks; he could not help it; he could not find a single word to say. It seemed as if he were spell bound, and yet she pressed his hand, and said, "You have a good heart, Kanute—stay always as you are now."

That was a night apart—it was impossible to sleep after it, and so Kanute found.

"I hope you won't quite forget us," said Joanna's father as he wished the young man good night. "Don't let the winter go by without coming to see us." Kanute thought that was as much as to say come next Sunday, so he went. But every night after working hours—and he worked by candle-light—Kanute went into the town, walked through the street where Joanna lived, and looked up at her windows. They were almost always lighted up; once he saw her shadow cross the blind; that was a happy evening. His master's wife was not too well pleased at his going out every night, gadding about, as she called it, but the master only smiled. "Let him be—he is but a youngster," he said.

"We shall meet on Sunday," thought Kanute,

"and I will tell her then how dearly I love her, and that she must be my own dear wife. I know I am only a poor shoemaker's lad, but I shall work and strive, and rise to be a master shoemaker: yes, I must tell her all that: there's no good in silent love, I have learnt that from the gingerbread cakes."

Sunday came, and Kanute paid his visit; but unluckily they were all going out to spend the evening, and they were obliged to tell him so. Joanna pressed his hand and said: "Have you been to the theatre yet? You *must* go. I shall sing next Wednesday, and if you are at liberty on that day I will send you a ticket; my father knows where your master lives."

How amiable it was of her! And on Wednesday morning Kanute received a sealed envelope, without a word of writing, but enclosing the ticket, and at night he found himself for the first time in his life in the theatre. What did he see? He saw Joanna; how lovely and graceful she looked! To be sure she was married to a stranger, but that was only the play; nothing but acting, Kanute knew that, for if it were true how could she have had the heart to send him a ticket just to look on at it? Every one clapped his hands, and even Kanute cried "Bravo!"

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE.

The king himself smiled on Joanna as if he enjoyed her beautiful voice ; ah, how insignificant Kanute felt ! but yet he loved her truly, and she loved him too ; but it is for the man to speak first, as the gingerbread young lady thought : there was really a great deal in that story.

When Sunday came round he went again ; Joanna was alone, and received him : nothing could be more fortunate.

“ It is a good thing you are come,” she said ; “ I was going to send my father to you ; but I had a presentiment that you would come to-night : for I must tell you that I am going to France next Friday. I must go, if I am ever to make anything of my voice.”

It seemed to Kanute that the whole room turned round ; his eyes were hot and dry, but he felt as if his heart were breaking. It was impossible to hide his sorrow. “ You good, kind heart !” said Joanna ; and then his tongue was loosened, and he told her how dearly he loved her, and begged her to be his wife. As he spoke he saw her colour change from red to white ; she dropped his hand, and answered gravely and sadly, “ Do not make yourself and me unhappy, Kanute. I shall always be a

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

good sister to you, on whom you may depend—but never anything more!” She passed her soft hand over his hot brow; “God gives us strength to bear all, if we only know how to will ourselves.”

At that moment her stepmother came in. “Kanute is wretched, because I am going away,” she cried. “Come, be a man!” and she laid her hand upon his shoulder: it seemed as though she had spoken of the journey, and of nothing else. “You are a child,” she said; “be good and reasonable as you used to be under the willow tree, when we were little.”

But to Kanute it seemed as if the whole world were moved out of its course; his thoughts were like loose threads, fluttering at the mercy of the wind. He stayed on, not knowing whether he had been asked to stay; but they were kind and friendly. Joanna poured out his tea, and sung to him—not the old song, but one so ineffably beautiful, sweet even to heart-breaking, and then they parted. Kanute did not hold out his hand, but she took it in hers, and said, “Will you not give your sister your hand at parting, dear old playfellow?” She smiled through the tears that fell down her

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE.

cheeks, and whispered again the word "brother." That was a poor consolation! And so they parted.

Joanna sailed for France; Kanute plodded along the muddy streets of Kopenhagen. His comrades in the workshop asked him why he was so dull and down-hearted, and told him to amuse himself while he was young. They went together to the dancing-rooms; many pretty girls were there, but none like Joanna: and here, where he thought of forgetting her, she rose brighter and more distinctly before his memory. "God gives us strength to bear all things if we only know how to will," she had said. A prayer rose in his heart,—the violins broke out, and the young girls danced gaily by; Kanute started, it seemed as if he had brought Joanna somewhere where she ought not to be, for she was surely with him in his heart. He went out of the room, and walked to the house where she used to live: it was all dark and silent—empty and lonely. The world went on its way, and left Kanute alone.

Winter settled down; the water in the harbour was frozen, it was silent as a funeral.

But when spring came back and the first steamer left the port, Kanute shouldered his

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

knapsack; a longing seized him to wander out into the world—anywhere except to France.

He wandered far into Germany, changing restlessly from town to town; it was not till he came to Nuremberg that he could make up his mind to stay.

Nuremberg is a wonderful old city; just as if it had been cut out of a picture book. The streets twist about as they will, the houses do not stand in stiff rows and squares; gable windows with little pinnacles, columns, and carved leaf work stand out above the footpaths. Down from the curious pointed roofs water-spouts, shaped like dragons or dogs with hanging tongues, reach to the very middle of the streets. Kanute stood alone in the market place: he was leaning against one of the old fountains covered with beautiful carvings of stories out of the Bible, or the history of the city. Between the grey sculptured stone two sparkling jets of water rise up in the sunlight; a pretty servant maid gave Kanute to drink; her hand was full of roses, and she offered him a flower. That was a good omen, he thought.

From the neighbouring church stole out the deep tones of an organ; it sounded so homelike that Kanute thought of the dear old church at

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE

Kjöge; he entered the great cathedral, the sunlight fell through the painted windows between the tall slender pillars; he knelt in prayer, and a quiet peace stole into his heart.

He found a good master in Nuremberg, and stayed with him. The old ramparts round the town are used for little kitchen gardens now, but the strong walls with the heavy turrets are standing yet. There the ropemaker has his ropewalk within the walls; and there, out of every rift and cranny, grow the elder branches, overhanging the low-roofed houses far below. In one of these houses lived Kanute's master, and over the tiny attic where Kanute sat and worked, fell the shadow of the elder-tree.

Here he lived a summer and a winter; he learned the German language well; but when the spring came he could bear it no longer, the scent of the elder-blossom conjured up the old garden at Kjöge; Kanute left his master, and wandered to another town where there was no elder-tree.

His workshop stood over an old stone bridge which crossed a rushing mill-stream; far away hurried the foaming waters closed in on either side with old houses, whose crumbling gable windows seemed as if they must shake down

into the stream. There was no elder here—not even a flower-pot with a slip of green—but just opposite the workshop was a large willow-tree that clung desperately to the house, so that it should not be torn away by the mill-stream, its branches drooped into the water as the branches of the old willow-tree at Kjøge drooped long ago.

Yes, certainly he had gone from the elder to the willow—and the tree, especially on moonlight nights, had something about it that went to his heart—it was not the moonlight, it was the tree itself.

And yet he could not bear it. Why not? Ask the elder-blossom, ask the willow-tree. He bade farewell to his master and wandered farther.

He never spoke of Joanna; he kept silence about his sorrow; but he put a deep meaning into the story of the gingerbread cakes. He saw now why the man had a bitter almond for his heart—he felt the bitter taste of it himself—Joanna, who was always so sweet and friendly—she was all honey. He felt as if the strap of his knapsack pressed him so that he could scarcely breathe; he loosened it, but it was no better: it was only half the world he saw

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE.

around him, the other half he bore within his heart—that was the way he felt.

Not till he saw the high snow mountains did the world seem lighter; his thoughts were turned outwards then, tears rose in his eyes.

The Alps seemed to him to be the world's great white wings, folded as if in prayer. What, if they unfolded, and spread wide their mighty pinions with their changeful pictures of pine woods, cataracts, blue-cloud, and dazzling snow? At the last day the earth would rise on her strong wings and soar aloft towards heaven to burst, like a soap-bubble, in the blaze of God's glory. "Oh, that the day were come!" he sighed.

Silently he wandered through the land that stretched before him like a grassy orchard; from the wooden balconies before the houses, maidens making lace nodded a kindly greeting, the mountain peaks glowed in the evening sunshine, and when he saw the green lakes gleam between the dark pine-trees, he thought of the broken coast of Kjöge, and his heart was stirred with sadness that was scarcely pain.

Yonder, where the Rhine flows away like one large wave, breaks into cloud, and is changed into snow-white vapoury mist as if

there were the very workshop of the clouds—a rainbow flutters over it like an untied ribbon—there he thought of the old mill at Kjöge, where the water leaps and roars.

He would gladly have lingered in the quiet city by the Rhine, but there were far too many elder and willow trees, and he wandered on across the giant mountains, through wild ravines, and along paths that hung like swallows' nests against the mountain side. The torrents plunged into the depths below, the clouds sailed over him, he trod amid thistles and alpine roses, and snow in the warm summer sunshine. He bade farewell to the north, and wandered on under fragrant chestnut-trees, among blooming vine gardens and fields of maize; the mountain stood like a wall between him and his memories, and that was well.

Before him lay the splendid city of Milan, and there he found a German master who took him into his service; it was a pious, quiet household, and the old man and his wife learned to love the silent lad, who worked so hard, spoke so seldom, and led so good and innocent a life. Kanute felt as if God had lifted his burden from him.

His greatest pleasure was to climb from time to time up on to the mighty roof of the marble church ; he fancied it was created out of his native snows, piled up into fantastic pointed towers, and wondrous fretwork, and wide vaulted halls ; from every nook and corner the lovely slender columns shone out in their dazzling whiteness. Above him was the pure blue sky of Lombardy, below lay the city and the wide green plain stretching northwards to the solemn peaks crowned with eternal snow. At the sight his heart wandered on to Kjöge, with its red walls overhung with ivy ; he longed to be within them, he hoped to find his grave there, far beyond the mountains.

One year he stayed in Milan ; he had now been three years away from his home. His master, who was kind to the silent stranger, took him one night to the great opera-house of La Scala. Kanute gazed in wonder on the splendid scene ; tier above tier rose the stalls draped with silk and lace, and filled with the beautiful Italian ladies ablaze with diamonds, their white hands filled with rare flowers. The men were in evening dress : rich uniforms glittering with gold and silver braid were

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

seen on every side. It was as light as in the brightest noonday, glorious music thrilled through the vast hall, it was far more beautiful than the theatre in Kopenhagen; but Joanna was there—Ah! what magic was at work? The curtain rose, and there stood Joanna in robes of silk with ornaments and crown of gold! She sang like one of the angels in heaven, she smiled as only she herself could smile, she looked straight up into Kanute's face. The poor lad seized his master's hand, and cried aloud, "Joanna!" No one else heard it; the music drowned the cry; but the old man nodded and said, "Yes; that is her name—Joanna." He pushed a printed paper into Kanute's hand, where the name was printed—her whole name in large letters.

It was no dream. Flowers and wreaths fell in a fragrant rain at her feet; when she left the stage she was called back, and came again and again.

In the street, men had taken the horses from her carriage that they might draw it along: Kanute was among them, shouting wildly with the rest. As the carriage stopped before a brilliantly-lighted house, he stood close to the carriage door; it opened, and she

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE.

stepped out, with the light falling full on her sweet face ; she smiled and thanked them all



with gentle graciousness. Kanute looked her in the face, she met his gaze calmly—she did

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

not even know him. A man, on whose breast glittered a star, offered her his arm : he was her promised husband, so the people said.

Kanute went home and strapped up his knapsack. In one minute one can live through a whole life : the old resistless longing was strong upon him, drawing him back to the elder—to the willow tree—ah ! if he were only there !

The kindly old people urged him to stay : vainly they warned him of the winter, and told him that the mountain paths were already white with snow. No words could hold him back ; surely, he thought, he could follow with his stout alpen stock in the track of the heavy carriage.

He climbed the mountain and began the long descent—down—ever downwards. Wearily he looked for some hut, some friendly village, but there was none. The stars sparkled above him, his feet tripped and stumbled, his head swam ; far below his feet the stars were sparkling, as if the sky had fallen. It was the lights of a little town shining through grey mist. Wearied out, he reached a poverty-stricken inn, where he stayed the night.

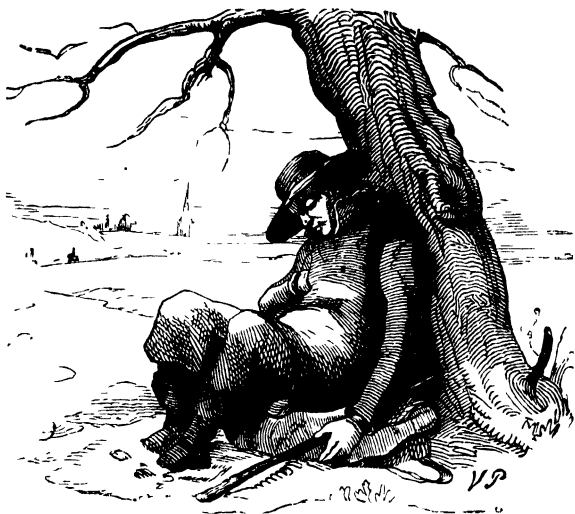
A night and a day he lingered there to gain

strength; the thaw had set in, and it was raining in the valley; but early the next morning a wandering harper came by and played one of the old Danish tunes, which Kanute had heard a thousand times in Kjöge. He had no strength to stand against it, and once more hastened northwards, hurrying as if he must reach his home before all he loved were dead. He spoke to no one of his feverish longing; hiding it, as he had always hidden his heart's sorrow. A settled grief is out of place in this world—even friends do not find it entertaining. A stranger, he wandered northwards through strange lands.

Evening drew on. He was walking along the open road. The frost was keen and bitter; the country flat, with fields and meadow lands; on the roadside stood a willow tree—it was quite home-like. Kanute seated himself under the tree: he was very weary: his head was heavy, his eyes stiff with drowsiness. He felt how the tree stretched its arms over him; to his tired fancy it seemed a tall man; the "Willow-father" himself come to lift his tired son in his strong arms and carry him back to Kjöge to the old garden. It was the very same old willow, who had wandered out into the world

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

to find him; now he had found him and carried him back to the brock side; and there stood Joanna in her splendid dress and golden crown, just as he had seen her last: and she called aloud to him, "Welcome home!"



Before him stood two quaint figures that looked much more life-like than they used to do in his childhood; they were altered, but he knew them again; it was the two gingerbread cakes, they were turned right side forward and looked very nice. "A thousand thanks!" they

UNDER THE WILLOW-TREE.

said to Kanute. "You have loosened our tongues, so that we have spoken out our thoughts, and something is come of it at last. We are engaged !"

They walked prettily hand in hand along the streets of Kjöge ; they did not look amiss, even on the wrong side ; there was really no fault to find with them. They walked straight to the church, and Kanute and Joanna followed. They also walked hand in hand : the church stood open ; the ivy hung as ever over its red walls ; the organ pealed out, and they stepped up the broad path to the porch. "Let the master and mistress go first," said the gingerbread people, making room for Kanute and Joanna. They knelt before the altar, Joanna bent over him, and tears, icy cold, fell from her eyes upon his burning cheeks. It was the ice round her heart, melted at last by his true love, and—he woke. He was sitting under the leafless willow tree, in a foreign land, upon a winter's night ; from the heavy clouds, sharp hailstones fell and lashed his face.

"That was the happiest hour of my life," he said, "and—it was a dream. Ah ! let me dream again !"

He closed his eyes once more ;—he slept, and

dreamed. Towards morning the snow fell silently. It flew before the wind, and drifted over him : he slept. The villagers on their way to church saw a wandering 'prentice lad lying on the road side. He was dead—frozen under the willow tree !

The Princess and the Pea.

THERE was once a prince who wanted to marry a princess ; but she must be a real princess. He travelled all over the world to find one, but there was always something in the way. Princesses were to be had in plenty ; but it was another thing to be certain whether or no they were real ones. There was always something not quite as it should be.

So the prince came home quite dispirited, for he dearly longed to marry a real princess.

One evening a fearful storm broke over the town ; it thundered and lightened, and the rain

came down in streams; it was terrible to see. In the very fiercest of the storm, a knock was heard at the town gate, and the old king went out to open it.

Outside the gate stood a princess. But oh! what a sight she was from the rain and storm! The water was streaming down from her hair and clothes; it ran in at the toes of her shoes and out again at the heels. And yet she said she was a real princess.

"Oh yes!" thought the old queen, "we shall very soon find that out." But she said nothing; she went up into the bed-room and pulled off all the beds; then she put a pea on the bedstead; over that she laid twenty mattresses, and over the twenty mattresses twenty eiderdown beds.

That was the bed in which the princess was to pass the night. In the morning they asked her how she had slept.

"Very badly indeed," said the princess; "I have not closed an eye all night. Goodness knows whatever was in the bed! I have been lying on something dreadfully hard, for I am black and blue all over. It is really frightful."

Now then they all saw that she was a real princess, because she had found out the pea

through all the twenty mattresses, and twenty eiderdown beds. No one but a real princess could possibly be so sensitive.

So the prince married her, for he knew that he had in her a real princess for a wife; and the pea was placed in the royal museum, where it is still to be seen, unless any one has stolen it.

Now this is a true story.

The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweeper.

DID you ever see a very old wooden cupboard, coal-black with age, and covered from top to bottom with carved scrolls and foliage? Just such a one stood once in a parlour; it had been left as a legacy by some great-great-grandmother. Carved roses and tulips were to be found upon it in plenty, lying among curious twirls, flourishes, and stags' heads with branching antlers. In the

SHEPHERDESS AND CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

centre of the cupboard was the carved figure of a man ; it was really laughable to look at, for it grinned from ear to ear ; it had goat's legs, little horns on its head, and a long beard. The children in the room called it " Billy-goat's-legs Head-and-tail-general-sergeant-commander-in-chief ! " That was a hard name to pronounce, and there are not many people who receive such a title, much less have it carved in wood. Well, there he was ; and he was always looking at the little table under the mirror, where there stood a lovely little shepherdess, made of porcelain. Her shoes and hat were gilt ; in her dress she wore a crimson rose, and her shepherd's staff was in her hand ; she was very lovely. Close beside her stood a little chimney-sweeper, as black as a coal. He, too, was made of porcelain, and was as dainty and elegant as could be ; as to his being a chimney-sweeper, that was only his make-believe. The china worker could just as well have made him into a prince if he had chosen.

He stood there with his little ladder ; his face was as pink and white as a girl's, and that was, properly speaking, a mistake, for it ought to have been rather blacked. He stood very close to the shepherdess ; they had both

been placed just where they were, and since they *were* placed there, they had fallen in love. They suited each other exactly; both were young people, both made of the same porcelain, and both equally brittle.

Near to them stood a figure, three times their size. It was an old Chinaman, who could nod his head. He was made of porcelain too, and he said that he was the little shepherdess's grandfather, but I doubt whether he could prove it. He declared that he had authority over her, and therefore he had nodded his head when "Billy - goat's - legs Head - and - tail - general - sergeant - commander - in - chief" asked him for her hand.

"That is the husband for you," said the old Chinaman; "a man who is, I believe, real mahogany. He can make you Lady Billy - goat's - legs Head - and - tail - general - sergeant - commander - in - chief. He has the whole cupboard full of silver plate that he keeps locked up in secret drawers."

"I won't go into the dark cupboard," said the little shepherdess; "I have been told that he has eleven porcelain wives in there already."

"Then you shall be the twelfth," said the

SHEPHERDESS AND CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

Chinaman. "This very night, as soon as ever the old cupboard creaks, you shall be married, as true as I'm a Chinaman." And he nodded his head, and went to sleep.

The little shepherdess cried, and looked at her true love, the little chimney-sweeper. "I must ask you," she said, "to go with me out into the wide world, for we cannot possibly remain here."

"I will do all you wish," said the chimney-sweeper. "Let us go at once; I think I shall be able to support you with my—profession."

"If we were but safely off the table!" she said. "I shall know no peace till I am out in the wide world."

Her lover soothed her, and showed her how to place her little foot in the carved edges and gilt leaf work of the table leg. He set up his ladder to help her, and very soon they were safely on the floor. But when they looked across at the old cupboard, they saw that it was all astir, the stags' heads were arching their necks, and pricking up their antlers, the wooden Commander-in-chief was jumping up and down, and calling out to the old Chinaman, "They are running away; they are running away!"

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

That frightened them dreadfully, and they jumped into an open drawer under the window sill.

In the drawer were three packs of cards, but none of them quite perfect. There was also a dolls' theatre, which had been set up as well as circumstances allowed ; a play was going on at that moment.

All the queens, diamonds, hearts, clubs, and spades were sitting in the front row, fanning themselves with their tulips ; the knaves stood behind them, showing clearly that they had heads above and below, as is often the case with playing cards. The play was all about two lovers who were parted for ever, and the shepherdess wept, for was not that her own story ? "I cannot bear it," she said. "Take me out of this drawer." But when they reached the floor, the old Chinaman woke up and shook all over his body, which was made in one piece.

"Now the old Chinaman is coming," said the little shepherdess, sinking on one knee in terror.

"I have an idea," said the chimney-sweeper. "Let us get into the large pot-pourri jar in the corner yonder. There we can rest on rose

SHEPHERDESS AND CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

leaves and lavender, and if he comes after us, we can throw salt in his eyes."

"That will never do," she answered. "Many years ago the old Chinaman was engaged to that jar, and there is always a certain tenderness left between people who have stood in that relationship to each other. No, nothing is left for us but to go out into the wide world."

"Have you really courage to go with me out into the wide world?" said the chimney-sweeper. "Have you thought how large it is, and that we can never come back again?"

"I have!" she said.

The chimney-sweeper looked at her earnestly, and said, "My path lies through the chimney! Have you really courage to go with me into the stove, through the fire-box, and up the pipes? That will lead us into the chimney, and then I shall know how to manage. We shall climb so high that no one can overtake us, and at the very top there is a hole that leads out into the wide world."

He led her to the door of the stove.

"It looks dark," she said, but she followed him through the fire-box, and up the pipe, where all was black as night.

"Now we are in the chimney," he said.

"Look up yonder, a glorious star is shining." And it really was a star in the sky that was shining down on them, as if to show them the way. They climbed and crept; it seemed a fearful path, high, steep, and endless; but he lifted her, and held her, and showed her where to set her little foot, until they reached the very top of the chimney, where they sat down quite tired out, as well they might be.

The sky with all its stars was high above them; the town with its twinkling lights lay far below.

They could see all round them—far, far out into the wide world. The poor little shepherdess had *never* fancied it like that; she leant her weary head on the shoulder of her faithful chimney-sweeper and cried till the gold was washed off her sash.

"This is too much!" she cried. "I cannot bear it. The world is far too large. Oh, were I only back on the table under the mirror! I shall know no peace till I am there again. I *have* followed you out into the wide world—now take me back again, if you really love me."

The chimney-sweeper tried to reason with

SHEPHERDESS AND CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

her; he reminded her of the old Chinaman, and the terrible Commander-in-chief; but she only sobbed and kissed her little chimney-sweeper, so that he could do nothing else but yield to her, though it was rather foolish.

So they climbed with endless trouble back again down the chimney, down the pipe, through the fire-box, into the stove—it was anything but pleasant. They lingered for a moment in the oven and listened behind the door, just to find out what was going on in the room. All was silent—they looked in—mercy on us! there lay the old Chinaman in the middle of the floor broken into three pieces! He had jumped off the table after them, his back had come off in one piece, and his head had rolled into a corner. The Commander-in-chief was standing where he had always stood, pondering deeply.

“Oh, this is terrible!” cried the little shepherdess. “My old grandfather is broken in pieces, and it is all our doing! I shall never survive it!” And she wrung her little hands.

“He can be riveted,” said the chimney-sweeper; “dear me! he can be riveted. Don’t excite yourself so dreadfully. If they cement his back, and put a good rivet in his neck, he

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

will be as good as new, and able to give us many a sharp word yet."

"Do you think so?" she said. And then they crept up on to the table where they had stood before.

"Much the forwarder we are!" said the chimney-sweeper. "We might have spared ourselves some trouble."

"If my dear grandfather were but riveted!" said the little shepherdess. "I wonder if it costs much."

And riveted he was. The family had his back cemented, and a good rivet put in his neck, and he was as good as new, only he could not nod his head.

"We have grown consequential since we were broken to pieces!" said the Commander-in-chief. "I really don't see why you should give yourself such airs. Am I to have her, or am I not?"

The chimney-sweeper and the shepherdess looked imploringly at the old Chinaman; they were terribly afraid lest he should nod. But that was just what he could not do; and it would have been extremely mortifying for him to have to keep telling every one that he had a rivet in his back.

So the little porcelain folk were left together, and they blessed their grandfather's rivet, and loved each other dearly till they broke.

The Tinder-Box.

A SOLDIER went marching by along the road. "Left, right, left, right!" He had his knapsack on his back, and a sabre at his side, for he was coming home from the war.

On the high road he met an old witch; she was very repulsive to look at: her under lip hung down over her chin. "Good evening, soldier," she said. "What a fine sabre you have got! and what a large knapsack! You are something like a soldier, and you shall have as much money as ever you like."

"Thank you, old witch," said the soldier.

"Do you see that tall tree yonder?" said the witch. "It is hollow inside. Climb up to the top and you will see a hole through which you can let yourself down right into the tree. I

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

will tie a rope round you so that I can pull you up again when you call to me."

"What am I to do when I am down in the tree?" asked the soldier.

"Fetch up money," said the witch. "Below the roots of the tree you will find a large hall, lighted up with more than three hundred lamps. Then you will see three doors; open them all, the key is in each lock. In the first room you will see a large chest in the middle of the floor, and on the chest a dog with eyes as big as saucers. Don't mind him in the least. Here is my blue-checked apron; spread that out on the floor and put the dog upon it, then open the chest and take out as much copper as you like. If you prefer silver you must go on into the next room. But *there* is a dog with eyes as big as mill-wheels—you need not fear him, however. Put him on my apron and take out the money. If you want gold, you can have it, as much as ever you can carry, by going into the third room; but the dog on the chest of gold has eyes as big as steeples—he is a savage brute, you may take my word for it. Never fear him, however; put him on my apron, he won't hurt you, and you can take as much gold as you will."

"That doesn't sound amiss," said the soldier. "But what am I to give you for it, old witch? for I don't suppose you mean to do it for nothing."

"I do," said the witch. "I won't take a penny. All I ask is that you shall bring me up an old tinder-box that my grandmother left behind her the last time she was there."

"Well, then," said the soldier, "tie the rope round my waist."

"Here it is," said the witch, "and here is my blue-checked apron."

The soldier climbed up the tree, let himself down, and stood, as the witch had said, in a great hall where hundreds of lamps were burning. He opened the first door. Ugh! there sat the dog with eyes as big as saucers, glaring at him. "You're a nice fellow!" said the soldier, lifting him on to the witch's apron.

Then he filled his pockets with copper, shut the chest, and went into the next room. Right enough, there sat the dog with eyes as big as mill-wheels.

"You had better not stare so," said the soldier; "your eyes might come out of your head altogether." He lifted the dog on to the witch's apron, and at the sight of all the silver

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

in the chest, he emptied his pockets again, and filled them and his knapsack too with silver. Then he went into the third room. That really was awful! The dog had eyes every inch as big as steeples, and they both spun round like wheels.

"I hope you are well," said the soldier, saluting, for he had never seen a dog like that before. But when he had looked at him long enough he thought, "Well, I must be quick," lifted him on to the apron and opened the chest. Heavens! what a heap of gold! enough to buy up all the town: with all the barley sugar, tin soldiers, whips and rocking-horses in the whole world. The soldier soon threw away all the silver, and filled his pockets, knapsack, cap, and even his boots with gold. He could hardly walk, but he had the money. He put back the dog on the chest, shut the door and called up the tree. "Now pull me up, old witch."

"Have you got the tinder-box?" asked the witch.

"Heart alive!" said the soldier, "I quite forgot that."

He went back and fetched it; the witch pulled him up, and there he stood on the high road,

THE TINDER-BOX.

with his pockets, knapsack, cap, and boots brimful of gold.

"What do you want with the tinder-box?" asked the soldier.

"That's no business of yours," said the witch; "you have your money; give me the box."

"What's that you say?" cried the soldier. "Tell me this very minute what you want it for, or I'll draw my sword and cut off your head."

"I won't!" said the witch.

The soldier immediately cut off her head. There she lay. He tied up all his money in her apron; slung it like a bundle over his shoulder, put the tinder-box in his pocket, and walked on towards the town.

It was a splendid town. The soldier went into one of the best hotels, engaged the largest room, and ordered everything he liked best for supper. He was rich now, because he had so much money.

The man who blacked his boots thought it was strange that such a rich gentleman should wear such very old boots, but the next day the soldier bought new ones, and a new suit of clothes. He was not a soldier now, but a fine gentleman; and the people spoke to him

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

of all the remarkable things in the town, of the king, and the beautiful young princess, his daughter.

"Where can one see her?" asked the soldier.

"You cannot see her," was the reply; "she lives in a large brazen castle, surrounded by walls and turrets. No one but the king may enter, because it was once prophesied that she would marry a common soldier."

"I should like to look at her," said the soldier; but it was quite impossible for him to obtain permission.

From this time he lived a merry life, going to theatres, and driving about in the royal parks and gardens. He gave away a great deal to the poor, and that was right of him: he knew of old what it is not to have a shilling in one's pocket. Now he was rich, wore fine clothes, and had numbers of friends, who all said he was an excellent fellow, and a perfect gentleman. The soldier was pleased at that. But unluckily, as he went on spending money every day, and never earning any more, he found himself at last with scarcely any left, and was obliged to leave his beautiful rooms for a little garret under the roof, where he had to black his own boots, and mend them with a packing-needle. None

THE TINDER-BOX.

of his friends came to see him now—there were too many steps to climb.

It was a dark night, and he could not even buy himself a candle; but it suddenly occurred to him that there was a piece of candle left in the tinder-box which he had fetched up for the old witch, out of the hollow tree. He struck a light, and the moment it flashed up, the door opened, and in came the dog with eyes as big as saucers. "What does my lord require?" said the dog.

"What is this?" said the soldier. "This is a lively sort of a tinder-box if I can get whatever I like out of it! Get me some money," he said to the dog, and *whish!* off he was—*whish!* there he was back again with a bag full of copper in his mouth.

Then the soldier began to see what a famous box it was. You struck it once, and up came the dog with eyes as big as saucers; you struck it twice, and up came the one that sat on the chest of silver; three times, and up came the one that kept guard over the gold. The soldier went down stairs again into his beautiful rooms, and bought some more fine clothes. Then all his friends knew him again directly and thought a great deal of him.

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

One day he began to think what a singular thing it was that nobody could get to see the princess. Every one said she was very beautiful, but what was the good of that if she had to live in a brazen castle surrounded by high walls? "Can't I manage to see her?" he thought. "Where is my tinder-box?" He struck a light, and up came the dog with eyes as big as saucers. "I know it is the middle of the night," said the soldier; "but I should like to look at the princess for a minute or so."

The dog was out of the house in a second, and before the soldier could draw breath, *whish!* there he was again, with the princess on his back. She lay there fast asleep; so beautiful that every one could see she was a princess. The soldier could not help kissing her once, soldier-like.

Then the dog ran back with the princess. But the next morning when the king and queen were at breakfast, the princess said that she had had a very strange dream in the night; she had ridden along on a dog's back, and been kissed by a soldier.

"That's a pretty story!" said the queen.

The next night one of the old ladies-in-waiting was ordered to watch by the princess's

THE TINDER-BOX.

bed, and see whether it was really a dream, or what was the meaning of it.

The soldier felt a great longing to see the princess again, so the dog was sent to fetch her, and ran for her as quickly as before. But the maid of honour was awake; she put on goloshes and ran behind them, and when she saw the dog disappear in a large house, she put a cross on the door with a piece of chalk. Then she went home and got into bed, and the dog came back with the princess. But when he saw a cross on the house where the soldier lived, *he* took a piece of chalk and put a cross on every house in the town. That was rather clever on his part, because now the maid of honour could not possibly tell which was the door.

Early the next morning, down came the king and queen, with the maid of honour and all the army, to see where the princess had been.

"There it is!" cried the king, as soon as he saw the first cross on a door.

"No, there it is, my dear husband," said the queen, looking at the second cross.

"But *there's* one and *there's* one!" cried everybody at once; for wherever they looked

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

nothing was to be seen but crosses. Then they began to understand that it was of no use looking any farther.

Now the queen was a very clever woman, who could do more than ride in a carriage. She took out her golden scissors, cut up a piece of silk, and made it into a pretty little bag. She then filled it with flour, and tied it round the princess's waist, so that the flour might be strewn all along the way she went.

That night the dog came again, and carried off the princess; the soldier had now fallen deeply in love with her, and would gladly have married her.

The dog never noticed the flour as it fell all along the road from the castle to the soldier's room. The next morning the king and queen saw clearly where their daughter had been, and the soldier was immediately arrested, and put in prison.

There he had to stop. It was dull and gloomy enough, and all they said to him was, "You will be hanged to-morrow!" *That* was not exactly cheering, and his tinder-box was left behind in his lodgings. The next morning, as he looked through the iron bars of his window, he saw the crowds of people hurrying into the

THE TINDER-BOX.

town to see him hanged. He heard the drums beating, and saw the soldiers marching by. Everybody was out, even a shoemaker's lad, in his apron and slippers, who was running so fast that one of his slippers fell off, and flew right up against the window where the soldier stood.

"Hallo! my lad," cried the soldier; "you need not be in such a tremendous hurry; they won't begin without me. If you would like to earn some money, just run to my lodgings, and fetch me my tinder-box; you shall have a shilling for your trouble, but you must be quick about it."

The lad thought he should like to earn the shilling, so he fetched the tinder-box, gave it to the soldier, and——well, now we shall hear.

The gallows was set up outside the town, and round it stood the soldiers and thousands of people. The king and queen sat on a splendid throne, opposite the judges and council. The soldier mounted the ladder, the rope was placed round his neck, when he said that the last harmless wish of a poor wretch was always granted, and he begged permission to smoke a pipe of tobacco—it would be his last pipe in this world.

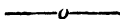
ANDERSEN'S TALES.

The king granted his request, and the soldier struck his box—once, twice, thrice! In a moment, up sprang the three dogs—the one with eyes as big as saucers,—the one with eyes as big as mill-wheels,—and the one with eyes as big as steeples.

“Help me, so that I shall not be hanged,” said the soldier. And the dogs flew at the judges and at all the council, seizing one by the leg and one by the nose, and tossing them up in the air to such a height that they fell down, and broke all to bits.

“I won’t be tossed!” said the king, but up he went, and the queen after him. That frightened the soldiers and the people to such a degree, that they cried out, “Noble soldier! you shall be our king, and marry the princess.”

Then they handed the soldier into the king’s carriage, and the three dogs ran by the side and cried, “Hurrah!” The street boys whistled through their fingers, and the soldiers presented arms. The princess was set free from the brazen castle, and became queen, which pleased her exceedingly. The wedding festivities lasted eight days, and the dogs sat up to table and stared with all their might.





Elder-Tree Mother.

THERE was once a little boy who had caught cold ; he had been out and got his feet wet ; how he managed it no one could think, for it was fine, dry weather. His mother undressed him, put him to bed, and brought in the teapot to make some elder-tea, for that is the best possible thing for a cold. At the same moment, in came the kind old man, who lived all by himself in the top story ; he had neither wife nor child of his own, but he was very fond of children, and used to tell them numbers of beautiful stories and fairy tales.

“Drink your tea, and then perhaps you will hear a story,” said the mother.

“Only I don’t know any new ones,” said the old man, nodding good-humouredly ; “but how did the child get his feet wet ?”

“Ah ! that is just what no one can understand,” said the mother.

“Shall I hear a tale ?” said the little boy.

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

"Yes, if you can tell me—for I must know that first—the exact depth of the gutter that runs down the street before your school-house?"

"It comes just half way up to my knee, if I stand in the very deepest part," said the child.

"Ah! that's where we get our wet feet from," said the old man. "Now, then, I owe you a tale, but I really do not know one."

"You can make one up," said the little boy. "Mother says that everything you look at turns into a fairy tale, and that you can make a story out of everything you touch."

"Yes, but that kind of story is not worth much. The best ones come of themselves; they tap at my forehead, and say 'Here we are.'"

"Won't they soon tap?" said the little boy. His mother laughed, put the elder-tea in the pot, and poured boiling water over it. "Tell me one—tell me one."

"I would if one would come of itself, but they give themselves such airs; they only come just when they like. Wait!" he cried, suddenly. "Here is one—look, there is one in the teapot."

The child looked at the teapot; the lid raised itself higher and higher, and out of it

ELDER-TREE MOTHER.

rose the elder blossoms as white as snow; long branches spread abroad from the lid and spout as well; farther and farther they stretched, pushing aside the bed curtains, and filling the whole room with a glory of green leaves and fragrant blossom. In the midst of the tree sat an old woman,—her dress was green as the leaves of the elder-tree, and covered with white flowers; it was hard to tell whether it was woven stuff or living leaves and flowers.

“What is her name?” said the little boy.

“Why the Romans and Greeks used to call her a Dryad,” said the old man; “but we do not understand that, and the sailors have found a much better name for her. They call her elder-tree mother, and it is to her that you must listen now.”

“In the corner of a small, poverty-stricken court stands just such a tall, beautiful elder-tree as this one, and under its branches one sunny afternoon sat two old people. It was an old sailor and his wife; they were great-grand-parents, and were going to keep their golden wedding, only they were not quite clear as to the exact date. The elder-tree mother sat above them in the tree, and looked as pleased as she does now. ‘I know when the golden wedding

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

is,' she said ; but they did not hear her, for they were talking of old times.

"‘Do you remember,’ said the old sailor, ‘when we were quite little and used to run and play together in this very yard where we are sitting now? We planted some slips and made a garden.’

"‘I remember,’ said the old woman, ‘one of the slips was an elder, and it took root, and shot up into this fine old tree that waves over us now.’

"‘Surely,’ he said ; ‘and yonder in the corner was a water-butt, where I sailed my boat that I had made myself. How it sailed ! To be sure I have seen a different kind of sailing since then.’

"‘Yes ; but first we went to school and got our learning,’ she said, ‘and then we were confirmed. Both of us cried ; but in the afternoon we walked hand in hand round the ramparts, and looked over the country round Kopenhagen and across the sea ; and then we went to Friedrichsburg, where the king and queen sail about in their beautiful boat.’

"‘But I was obliged to go and sail about in very different quarters, and stay away for years at a time.’

ELDER-TREE MOTHER.

“‘Yes; I often used to cry over it. I thought you were dead, and rocked to sleep by the waves. Many a night I got up to see if the weathercock had turned round; and it often turned, but you did not come. I remember so well how the rain came down one day; I was going to fetch the sweepings to put in the dustcart; the man had just come round with his cart to the house where I was servant; I stood near the dustbin, and looking at the rain, when up came the postman and gave me a letter from you. My word! how it had wandered about! I tore it open and read it, crying and laughing in a breath, I was so glad. It said you were in the warm countries where the coffee grows. What a lovely place it must be! You had so much to tell, and I was reading it all, while the rain poured down, and the man stood there with his cart. Then some one came and seized me round the waist, and——’

“‘And you gave him a sounding box on the ear, till it tingled again.’

“‘I did not know it was you. You had come as quickly as your letter. And how handsome you were! indeed so you are now. You wore a shiny hat, and had a large yellow

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

silk handkerchief in your pocket. How well you looked, and what a storm it was, and what a plight the street was in !'

" 'Then we got married, do you remember ?' he said, 'and then our first little lad was born, and after him came Marie, and Niels, and Peter, and Hans, and Christian.'

" 'All grown up now, and all good children, such as no one can say a word against.'

" 'And now their children have little ones of their own. It is a hardy race. If I remember right, it was about this time of year that we married.'

" 'Yes ; to-day is the golden wedding,' said the elder-tree mother, bending down her head to the old people. They thought it was a neighbour speaking to them, and they looked each into the other's face and clasped hands. The children and grandchildren soon came round them ; they knew well enough that it was the golden wedding-day, and they had congratulated the old people that very morning ; but the dear old folk had forgotten it already, though they could remember so well all that had happened long years ago. The elder-tree poured forth its fragrance, and the setting sun shone straight into the two old faces, lending

ELDER-TREE MOTHER.

them its glow and brightness; while the youngest grandchild danced round them, shouting with delight, and saying that they were all going to have a feast to-night—a feast, and roasted potatoes! The elder-tree mother nodded from the branches and cried ‘Hurrah!’ with the rest.”

“But that was not a fairy tale,” said the little boy, who had been listening all the while.

“You must understand it first,” said the old man; “let us ask the elder-tree mother about it.”

“That was not a fairy tale,” said the elder-tree mother, “but this is going to be one. The strangest fairy tales grow out of realities, or else my beautiful tree could not grow out of the teapot. You must allow that.” She lifted the little boy out of bed, and laid him in her lap: the branches closed over them with all their flowers; it was as if they were sitting in a leafy arbour, which flew away with them through the air. It was beautiful to see. The elder-tree mother had changed into a lovely little girl, but the dress was the same, and in her bodice she wore a spray of real elder flowers. Her great blue eyes were glorious to look upon, and a wreath of elder blossom

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

crowned her soft yellow curls. She and the little boy kissed each other, for they were of the same age, and both were as happy as they could be.

Hand in hand they walked out of the harbour into a beautiful flower garden ; near the velvet lawn the father's walking stick was tied up ; the children mounted the stick, and it became alive to them ; the silver knob changed to the head of a fiery, neighing steed, a long black mane tossed in the wind ; four strong, slender legs appeared ; the horse was wild and spirited, and galloped with them round the grass-plot. " Hurrah ! " cried the lad ; " we are riding miles away ; we are riding to the old castle, where we went last year." Round the lawn they rode, and the little girl, who, as we know, was no other than the elder-tree mother herself, cried, " Now we are in the country ; do you see the old farmhouse with the oven built out of the wall, like a gigantic egg ? The elder-tree waves over it ; the cock goes and scratches for the hens ; see, how he struts about ! Now we are at the church on the steep hill where the two oak trees grow ; look, one of them is quite withered. Now we are at the forge. The fire flames up, the half naked men

ELDER-TREE MOTHER.

swing the hammers till the sparks fly far and wide. Away to the splendid castle." And everything the little girl spoke of, as she sat behind him on the stick, flew past them as they went; the boy saw it all, and yet they only went round the lawn. Then they played about in the garden paths, and made a little garden bed; the girl took the elder flowers from her hair, and planted them; and they grew up into a large tree, like the one the two old people planted when they were little, as the old man had told the little boy. They walked hand in hand, just as the two old people had done; only instead of going to the ramparts, or the Friedrichsburg gardens, the little girl clasped the boy round the waist, and they flew all over the country. It was spring, and then summer, then autumn, and then winter. Thousands of pictures passed before the boy's eyes, and rested in his heart; and the little girl said, "You will never forget that." And through all their flight, the scent of the elder-tree rose up strong and fragrant; the child could certainly smell the roses and the fresh beech-trees too, but the elder-tree was the sweetest of all, for its flowers lay on the little girl's heart, and there it was that the boy rested his head.

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

"It is lovely here in spring," said the little girl, as they stood among the fresh green of the beech-woods; the wild thyme blossomed at their feet, and the pale pink anemones looked their loveliest among the tender leaves. "Oh, if it were always spring-time in the beautiful beech-woods!"

"It is splendid here in summer!" she said; and they flew by ancient castles, where the high walls and pointed gables were mirrored in the moat below, on which the swans sailed and looked up the cool, green avenues. In the fields the corn waved like a sea; red and yellow flowers grew in the trenches, wild hops and flowering bindweed filled the hedges; in the evening the moon rose large and round; the haystacks in the meadows breathed out all their fragrance. Such scenes cannot be forgotten.

"It was beautiful here in autumn," said the little girl. "The air was twice as high and blue; the forest put on all its richest colours—scarlet, gold, and green. The hounds dashed by in the chase; flocks of wild birds flew screaming over the Huns' graves, where the flowering brambles twined round the ancient stones. The sea was deep blue, covered with white sailed

ELDER-TREE MOTHER.

ships ; old women sat in the barns ; girls and children gathered hops into the large vats ; the lads sang merry songs, but the old people told tales of gnomes and sorcerers. It could never be better anywhere.

"It is lovely here in winter," said the little girl. "The trees were covered with rime frost so that they looked like silver coral. The snow cracked under foot as if one always had new boots on ; one after another the stars shot through the sky. The Christmas tree was lighted in the room, songs and merriment resounded ; in the peasant's cottage one heard the violin, they were playing games with apples ; even the poorest child said, 'It is beautiful here in winter.'"

Yes, it was beautiful. And the little girl told the boy everything ; the elder-tree blossomed, merrily waved the red flag with the white cross, the flag under which the old seaman sailed. The boy grew to manhood ; he went out into the wide world, into warm countries where the coffee grows. But at parting, the little girl took an elder-flower from her breast and gave it to him to keep for her sake. He put it in his prayer-book, and in foreign lands, whenever he opened the book, it opened at the place where

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

the flower was laid, and the more he looked at it the fresher it grew, so that he breathed again the fragrance of his native woods, he saw again the little maiden looking out from out the leaves with her clear blue eyes, and she whispered, "Here it is beautiful in spring, and summer, in autumn, and in winter," and hundreds of pictures passed through his mind.

Years passed away, and now he was an old man, and sat with his old wife under the blossoming elder-tree : their hands were clasped together as the hands of the old people had been, and the children spoke as they had done of old days and the golden wedding. The little girl sat in the tree overhead and nodded to the pair, saying, "To-day is the golden wedding-day!" Then she plucked off two flowers from her wreath, and kissed them ; they shone first like silver, and then like gold, and when she let them fall on the heads of the old people, each flower became a golden crown.

There they sat like a king and queen under the fragrant elder-tree, and he told his wife the story of the elder-tree mother as it had been told to him when he was a little boy. Both of them thought that there was a good deal in

ELDER-TREE MOTHER.

the story that was like their own; and that was the part they liked the best.

"Yes; so it is," said the little maiden in the tree. "Some call me Elder-tree mother, and some Dryad, but my real name is Memory. I dwell in the tree that grows and grows for ever; I can look back, I can tell tales. Let me see if you have your flower still."

The old man opened his prayer-book, and there lay the flower as fresh as if it had been just laid in. Memory nodded, and the two old people with the golden crowns sat in the red glow of the sunset: they closed their eyes, and—and—that was all the story.

The little boy was lying in bed; he did not know whether he had been dreaming, or whether any one had told him the story. The teapot stood still on the table, but there was no elder-tree growing out of it; and the old man who had told the story was just going out at the door.

"How beautiful it was!" said the little boy. "Mother, I have been in warm countries."

"I daresay you have," said his elder-tree mother, "when one drinks two cups of warm elder-tea one may well go to warm countries." And she covered him up warmly lest he should

take cold. "You have had a nice sleep," she said, "while we were disputing as to whether it was a fairy tale or not."

"Where is the elder-tree mother?" asked the boy.

"In the teapot," said his mother; "and there she may stay."

The Swan's Nest.

BETWEEN the Baltic and the North Sea lies an old swan's nest; there have been, and shall be, born swans who never die.

Long ago a flock of swans flew across the Alps, and lighted on the green Italian plains, where life was beautiful. That flight of swans was called Lombards.

Another flight, with bright plumage and faithful eyes, flew to Byzantium, settled down on the imperial throne, and spread out their strong wings to shelter him. They called these swans the Varangian guard.

Along the coast of France arose a cry of

THE SWAN'S NEST.

anguish and terror at sight of the wild flight of swans, who swooped down from the north, with firebrands for wings, and wildly rose the Litany, "From the fury of the Normans, good Lord deliver us."

On the green English coast stood the Danish swan, wearing the triple crown; his golden sceptre stretched far and wide over the land.

On Pomeranian soil the heathen bowed the knee, as the Danish swan sailed up under the banner of the cross, with drawn swords flashing.

"That was long ago," you say.

But in later days, mighty swans have risen from the nest. A light shone out high in air, over the countries of the world; with the strokes of his mighty pinions, a swan clove asunder the dim vapours of the twilight; the starry heaven flashed into sight as if it were drawn nearer to the earth. That swan was Tycho Brahe.

"Yes—*then*," you say. "But in our own days——"

We saw swan after swan rise in glorious flight; one let his wings sweep the strings of a golden harp; a burst of music echoed through the north, and the Norwegian cliffs resounded to the songs of old, heroic days; the pines

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

and birches swayed to the melody; gods, heroes, and noble women rose before the dark background of the forests.

A swan smote with his wings the block of marble till it burst asunder, and set free the forms of beauty held prisoned in the stone;



forth they wandered into the clear sunshine, and in all lands men rose to gaze upon, and welcome them.

A third swan spun the magic wire that girdles the earth itself, drawing country near to country, and lending to human speech the speed of lightning.

HOLGER DANSKE.

God loves the old swan's nest between the Baltic and North Sea. And if mighty birds of prey drew near to work it harm, the very fledglings would close in a circle round the beloved nest, offering their hearts' best blood, fighting with beak and claw!

Centuries will pass away, and many a noble swan will leave the nest to wing its glorious flight round the world, before the day comes when one can truly say, "That is the last swan—the last song from the old swan's nest."

Holger Danske.

KRONENBURG Castle stands in Denmark, close to the Oere Sound, through which tall ships sail by in hundreds, English, Russian, and Prussian. They all greet the old fortress with their cannon, "Boom!" And the Castle answers, "Boom!" That is the way the cannon say "Good morning" and "Good evening." In the winter, when no ships sail by, and the Sound is covered with ice right up to the Swedish coast, it looks just like an inland street. Danish and Swedish

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

flags are flying; Danes and Swedes cry to each other, "Good morning" and "Good night," but not with cannon—no, with a kindly clasp of the hand. One brings to the other biscuits and white bread, for foreign fare is always the sweetest. But the most beautiful sight of all is the grand, old castle, in whose deep inaccessible vaults sits Holger Danske. He is clad in mail armour; his head rests on his strong arms; his long beard has grown into the marble table, where he sits asleep. He dreams, and in his dream he sees all that happens in his native land. Every Christmas Eve an angel comes to him, and tells him that his dreams are true, but that he may sleep on undisturbed for a while longer. Denmark is not yet in danger, but if the danger ever comes, Holger Danske will spring to his feet, the table will shiver to pieces as he draws away his beard, and the hero will lay about him, so that every land shall ring with the story.

An old grandfather sat one evening telling his little grandson all this tale of Holger Danske, and the child knew well that what his grandfather said was true. As the old man spoke, he finished off a large wooden figure of

HOLGER DANSKE.

Holger Danske which was to ornament the prow of a ship, for the grandfather was a carver in wood, and had carved many a figure-head from which a good ship was to take her name. Now he had just carved Holger Danske standing proudly with his long beard; in one hand he held his flashing sword; in the other the Danish shield.

The old man spoke of so many noble Danish men and women that at last the child thought he must know as much as Holger Danske himself, especially as *he* only dreamed it all; and when the child went to bed, he thought so much about it that he pressed his little chin against the coverlet, and thought that he too had a beard, which was grown fast to the place.

But the old grandfather stopped to finish his carving, and put the last touches to the Danish shield. When he had finished, he looked earnestly at his work, and thought over all that he had heard and read, and what he had been telling the child that very evening. He nodded, wiped his spectacles, put them on again, and said, "He may not come in my time, perhaps; but the lad in bed yonder may live to see him and stand by him when the work begins in earnest." The old man nodded, and

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

the longer he looked at his Holger Danske the more clearly he saw that he had turned out a beautiful piece of work. The colours seemed to brighten, the armour glowed like wrought steel, the hearts on the Danish shield grew redder, and the lions with their gold crowns leaped and sprung.

"It is the finest national arms in the world," said the old man. "Lions and hearts—emblems of strength and love!" He looked at the topmost lion and thought of King Canute, who chained England fast to Denmark's throne; he looked at the second lion and thought of Waldemar, who gave peace to Denmark, and subdued the Vandal's lands; he looked at the third lion and thought of Margaret, who united into one Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. But as he looked at the hearts they burned and brightened into flames; each stirred in its place, and by its side stood a spirit.

The first flame led him into a dark and narrow prison-cell; there sat a fair and queenly woman, Eleanor Ulfeld,* daughter of Christian IV.; the

* This royal lady, whose only crime was her love to her husband, Corfitz Ulfeld, who was charged with high treason, was imprisoned for twenty-two years by her bitter enemy, Queen Sophia Amelia.

flame lighted on her heart—and blended with it like a glowing rose—the purest, noblest heart that ever beat in the breast of one of Denmark's daughters.

“That is one heart in Denmark's shield,” said the old grandfather.

The second flame beckoned him on to the open sea where the cannon thundered and the ships lay veiled in smoke; the flame spread like a military badge of honour on Haitfeld's breast, as he blew up his ship and crew to save the Danish fleet.*

The third flame led him to the squalid huts of Greenland, where Hans Egede† the pastor, ministered with love, in deed and word; the flame traced a star upon his heart—another heart on Denmark's shield.

This time the old man's fancy outran the flame, for he knew well whither it would lead him. In the peasant's lowly cottage stood Frederick VI., and wrote his name with chalk along

* In the naval engagement near Kjöge, between the Danes and Swedes, Haitfeld's ship, *Danebrog*, caught fire, and as it was drifting dangerously near the Danish fleet and city, he ordered it to be blown up.

† Hans Egede laboured fifteen years as a Christian teacher in Greenland, in the face of terrible difficulties and privations.

the beam ; * the flame leapt and quivered on his breast, and in the peasant's home his heart became a heart on the Danish shield. The old grandfather dried his eyes, for he had known and served King Frederick, with the silver hair and kind blue eyes ; he folded his hands and gazed still before him. Then his young daughter-in-law came up and told him it was late—supper was ready, and it was time for him to rest.

“Why, what a beautiful figure you have carved, grandfather !” she cried. “Holger Danske, and our old shield. It seems to me as if I have seen that face before.”

“No ; you cannot have seen it,” said the old man ; “but I have seen it, and I have tried to carve it in the wood just as I see it in my memory. It was long ago, when the English were lying in the harbour, on the second of April, † when we showed them we were still the

* On his journey along the western coast of Jutland, King Frederick entered the cottage of a poor woman, who begged him to write his name on one of the beams of her cottage, as a token of his visit. He did much towards improving the condition of his poorer subjects, and his coffin was carried by Danish peasants to his grave at Roeskilde.

† The naval combat between the Danes and the English, under Parker and Nelson.

HOLGER DANSKE.

old Danish sea-king. As I was fighting on board the *Denmark*, in Steen Bille's squadron, a man stood by my side, and the balls seemed to fear him. Merrily he sang out old sea-songs and fought like some one more than man. I remember his face now; but where he came from, or whither he went, neither I nor any other of us knew. I have often thought it might have been Holger Danske, who had swum out from Kronenburg to help us in our hour of need. That was what I thought, and this is his likeness."

The figure threw long shadows over the wall and ceiling; it seemed as if the real Holger Danske stood behind it, for the shadow rose and fell; but perhaps it was only because the light flickered on the table. The young woman kissed the old grandfather, and led him to his arm-chair by the table, while she and her husband, who was the father of the little child asleep in the bed, sat down to eat their supper. The old man spoke of the Danish lion and the Danish hearts—of strength and gentleness: he said that there was a strength other than that which lay in the sword, and pointed to the bookshelves where stood Holberg's *Comedies*, which one reads again and again, and fancies one recog-

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

nizes in them all the characters of bygone days.

"He, too, knew how to strike," said the old grandfather; "how to slash the follies and eccentricities of men." And looking across to the calendar, with the picture of the Round Tower,* which hung by the looking glass, "He was another," continued the old man; "Tycho Brahe wielded the sword, not to smite flesh and blood, but to strike out a clearer path up to the stars of heaven. And he, too, who sprang from my old father's class, the wood carver's son, he whom we have seen ourselves, whose white hair and strong, broad shoulders, are known in all lands—he was a sculptor; I am but a carver! Yes; Holger Danske can come in many forms; so that through all the world one sees the might of Denmark. Shall we drink to Bertel's† health?"

But the little child in bed saw clearly the old Kronenburg towering above the Oere Sound; he saw the real Holger Danske, sitting alone in the deep vault, his beard grown fast to the marble table, dreaming of all that happened overhead. Holger Danske dreamed too of all

* The observatory in Kopenhagen.

† Bertel Thorwaldsen.

HOLGER DANSKE.

that went on in the little room ; he heard every word, and nodded in his dreams.

“Yes,” he cried, “ keep me in your hearts and in your memory, ye Danish folk. In the hour of danger, I shall be at hand.”

And the clear daylight fell over Kronenburg ; the wind bore along the sound of the hunting horns from the country round ; the ships sailed by with their greeting “ Boom ! Boom ! ” And Kronenburg answered “ Boom ! Boom ! ” But Holger Danske woke not, let them thunder as loud as they might, for they only meant “ Good morning ! ” “ Good evening ! ”

They must thunder in a different fashion before he wakes ; but he *will* wake, for there is life in Holger Danske.





A Heart-felt Sorrow.

THERE are, properly speaking, two parts to this story; the first part could very well be left out, only it gives us some explanations which may be useful.

We were staying once in a country house; the master and mistress were away on a visit, and during their absence a good lady arrived

A HEART-FELT SORROW.

from the neighbouring town, bringing with her a pug-dog, and some shares in a tan-yard which belonged to her. The shares were for sale, and we advised her to put them in an envelope and address it to the master of the house, "General of the commissariat-department, knight, &c., &c."

She listened with great attention, took the pen, paused, and begged us to say it again very slowly. We did so, and then she began to write, but in the middle of "General of the commi—" she stopped, sighed deeply, and said, "I am but a woman!" As she wrote, the pug curled himself up on the floor and growled; he too was travelling for his health and amusement, and they might have offered him something better than the floor to lie on. As far as his looks went, he was a mixture of snub-nose and beer-barrel.

"He won't bite any one," said the lady; "he has no teeth. He is quite one of the family—faithful, but crusty. That, however, is because my grandchildren tease him; they are fond of playing at weddings, and they will make him act the bridesmaid. It is such a trouble to him, poor little doggie."

She sent off her papers, and lifted the pug

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

into her arms.—That is the first part that could have been left out.

PART THE SECOND.

The pug died.

It was about a week later ; we arrived at the town, and took rooms in the inn. Our windows looked into a courtyard, which was divided into two parts by a wooden wall. In one part there hung all manner of hides and skins, dressed and undressed : it was the widow's tan-yard. Her pug had died that very morning, and was buried in the yard ; and the grandchildren of the widow—I mean the tanner's widow, for the pug had never been married—were closing in the grave ; such a well-made grave, that it must have been a pleasure to lie in it.

Sand was strewn over it, and a neat row of flower pots placed all round ; on the top was a broken beer bottle, with the neck uppermost ; it was not at all allegorical.

The children danced round the grave, and the eldest of them, a practical youngster of seven years old, proposed that they should exhibit the grave to all the children in the

alley at the back; the admittance fee to be one trouser-button for each person. Every boy would be sure to have a trouser-button, and could give one to a little girl. The proposal was agreed to by all.

All the children from the alley—nay, even out of the little side street, came crowding in, and every one brought a button, so that the town was full of boys going about with only one brace to their trousers; but then they had seen the pug's grave, and the sight was worth far more than that.

Outside in the street, before the tan-yard gates, stood a little ragged girl, with a pretty face, blue eyes, and curling hair. She did not cry or speak to any one, but every time the gates were opened, she cast a long, wistful glance into the space beyond. She knew she could not go in, for she had no button, so she waited sorrowfully till the gates were shut, and every one had gone away, and then she sat down, with her face hidden in her little brown hands, and cried as if her heart would break. She was the only one who had not seen the pug's grave. It was a sorrow as deep as the sorrows of grown men and women.

We saw all this from above—and seen from

above, it—like so many troubles of our own and other people's—can call forth a smile.

That is the story, and whoever does not understand it, had better take some shares in the widow's tan-yard.

In Years to Come.

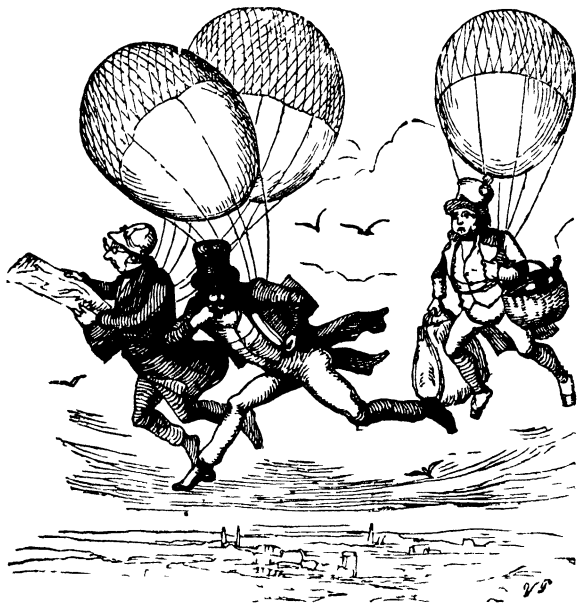
YES, in years to come we shall fly on the wings of steam high in the air, over the mighty ocean. The young inhabitants of America will visit the old Continent of Europe. They will come to admire the ancient monuments and ruined cities, just as we make pilgrimages to the fallen glories of Southern Asia.

In years to come they will certainly visit us.

The Thames, the Rhine, and the Danube will roll on as ever; Mont Blanc will still stand with its summit veiled in snow; the northern lights will play over the ice and snow. One generation after another will have mingled with the dust; numbers of the great ones of to-day are for-

IN YEARS TO COME.

gotten ; forgotten as entirely as those who lie under the hill on which the rich huckster, to whom the land belongs, has set up a bench where he can sit and look out over his waving cornfields



The air-ship comes : it is crowded with passengers, for the journey is quicker than by sea ; the submarine electro-magnetic wire has already telegraphed the number of the passengers.

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

Already Europe is in sight, it is the Irish coast that lies beneath them; but the passengers sleep on, they do not wish to be waked till they are exactly over England. There they will tread the country of Shakespeare, as the intellectual ones of the party have it—the home of politics and machinery, as others say.

Here they stay for a whole day: they are a busy race, but they can yet afford so much time for England and Scotland.

On they go, through the tunnel under the Channel to France. They speak of Charlemagne, Napoleon, and Molière; the scholars among them have much to say of the ancient classic school; healths are drunk to the memory of heroes, poets, and scientific men unknown to us, but who are said to have been born in Paris—the crater of Europe.

The air-ship flies over the land which sent out Columbus, where Cortez was born, and Calderan sang in rhythmic verse; enchanting, black-eyed donnas still live in the sunny valleys, and the songs tell of the Alhambra and the Cid.

Through the air, over the sea, to Italy, to the Eternal City. It has disappeared; the Campagna is desolate; a few vestiges are shown of St. Peter's Church, but their genuineness is doubted.

IN YEARS TO COME.

Away to Greece to sleep for a night in the splendid hotel on the summit of Olympus; then *that* is done; on to the Bosphorus, to rest an hour or two and see the place where once Byzantium stood—there, where the Sagas speak of Turkish harems, a few poor fishermen are spreading out their nets. Above, the ruins of mighty towns on the rushing Danube; towns unknown to our day; here and there the air-ship descends, and the travellers linger to inspect the monuments left among them. Again they wing their rapid flight.

Germany lies below them; once a network of railway and canals. The land where Luther spoke, Goethe sang, and Mozart wielded the sceptre of harmony. Great names shine out in science and in art, but we know them not. One whole day is given to Germany and one to the north—the birthplace of Oerstedt and Linnæus—to Norway, home of the ancient heroes and of the Normans. Iceland is taken on the return journey: the Geyser foams no longer, Hecla is extinguished; but an eternal stone table of the Saga still holds fast the island rock in the midst of the stormy seas.

“There is a great deal to be seen in Europe,” say the young Americans; “and we

have seen it all in eight days. It can be easily done by following the directions of the great traveller"—here they mention one of their contemporaries—"in his famous work 'Through Europe in Eight Days.'"

Thumbelina.

THERE was once a woman who dearly longed to have a little child; but she did not know where to find one. She went to an old witch, and said to her, "I do so wish for a little child; can you not tell me where I may obtain one?"

"Nothing is easier," said the witch. "Here is a barley corn; but it is not one of those which the farmer sows in his field, or that the fowls eat. Put it into a flower pot, and you will soon see something."

"Thank you," said the woman, and she gave the witch twelve shillings, for that was the price of it. Then she went home and planted the barley corn; a beautiful flower grew out of it, it looked like a tulip, only the

THUMBELINA.

leaves were as tightly closed as the leaves of a bud.

"That is a lovely flower," said the woman, and she kissed the red and yellow petals. At her kiss the flower opened with a loud crack. It was a real tulip, such as one can see anywhere; but in the centre of the flower, seated on one of the green velvet stamina, was a tiny girl—a beautiful, delicate little creature, no taller than half one's thumb, so that when she saw her the woman named her Thumbelina.

A polished walnut shell was made into a cradle for her, and there Thumbelina slept soundly on a bed of violets, with a large rose leaf for a coverlet. In the day time she lived on a tulip leaf which floated across a plate of water; the mother placed a pretty wreath of flowers round the edge, and gave Thumbelina two strong white horsehairs so that she could row her little raft all round the plate. It was a pretty sight to see her; and prettier still to hear her sing in a sweet little voice as clear as a silver bell.

As she lay in bed one night, an old toad came in through a broken window pane; a great, ugly, wet toad. She hopped on to the table, and saw Thumbelina asleep under her rose leaf.

"She would be a nice wife for my son," said the toad, and taking up the walnut shell where Thumbelina lay asleep, she hopped back again through the window and out into the garden. Near the garden ran a wide brook with marshy banks, and that was where the old toad and her son lived. Ugh! he was an ugly, frightful creature, the very image of his mother. "Koax, koax, brekerekex!" that was all he could say when he saw the pretty little thing in her cradle.

"Don't speak so loud, you will wake her," said the old toad; "she is as light as a feather and could easily get away. We will put her on one of the large water lily leaves in the brook; it will seem like an island to her, tiny as she is. She will not be able to escape from it, and we shall have plenty of time to get ready the state-room under the marsh, where you can begin housekeeping."

Early in the morning poor little Thumbelina awoke, and when she saw where she was, she cried bitterly, for the water closed round the leaf on every side, and it was impossible to reach the land.

The old toad was very busy down in the swamp, decking out her room with sedge and

THUMBELINA.

yellow rushes to make it all quite comfortable for her new daughter-in-law. Then she swam out with her ugly son to the leaf where Thumbelina sat; they came to fetch the bed which was to be put in the bridal chamber before the bride arrived. The old toad bowed low in the water before Thumbelina, and said to her, "This is my son. He is to be your husband, and you will have a beautiful house down in the swamp."

"Koax, koax, brekerekekex!" was all the son could say for himself.

Then they took the pretty little cradle, and swam away with it; but Thumbelina sat alone on the green leaf and cried; she did not want to go and live with the frightful old toad, or to marry the ugly son. Now, the little fishes who were swimming to and fro in the water, had seen the old toad, and heard every word she had said; they leaped up to look at the little girl, and directly they saw her they all thought her so pretty that they felt quite sorry to think of her going to live with the old toad. And what is more, they determined that it should never happen; so they swam up to the stem of the lily leaf, and bit it through. Away sailed the leaf down the brook, and bore Thumbelina

swiftly with it—far away, where the toad could never reach her.

Thumbelina sailed by one town after another; the birds on the bushes saw her, and sang, "Oh, what a sweet little girl!" On floated the leaf, and took her at last right out of the country. A pretty, white butterfly fluttered round her head, and settled at last on the leaf where she lived. Thumbelina was glad of his friendship; it was so lovely now where she was sailing; the toad could not reach her; the sun shone on the water till it sparkled like liquid silver. She took off her sash, and tied one end of it round the butterfly, and the other end to the leaf, so that now it went faster than ever with the butterfly for a sail.

Suddenly up flew a large cockchafer; he saw Thumbelina, and pounced upon her in a moment, seizing her round the waist, and flying away with her to the top of a tree—the green leaf went sailing on, and the poor butterfly with it, for he was tied fast, and could not get away.

Oh! how frightened poor Thumbelina was when the great cockchafer flew away with her up to the tree. She grieved most of all for the poor white butterfly whom she had tied to the leaf, for if he could not get away, he would

certainly die of hunger. But the cockchafer did not trouble himself about that. He sat down by her on one of the leaves of the tree, gave her some honey to eat, and told her she was very pretty, although she was not at all like a cockchafer. In a short time, the other cockchafers who lived in the tree came to call upon them. They looked at Thumbelina, and said, "Why, she has only two legs; that looks dreadful!" "She has no feelers," said another. "How slender she is round the waist fie, she looks like a human being! How extremely ugly she is!" That was what the lady cockchafers said, but in reality Thumbelina was lovely, and the cockchafer who had carried her off owned it. But when all the others said she was ugly, he began to think it must be true, so he told her he would not have her, she could go where she liked. They flew down with her, and placed her on a daisy. There she sat and cried, because she was so ugly that even the cockchafers would not have her; and yet she was as beautiful as any one can imagine; as delicate and tender as a rose leaf.

All the summer through poor Thumbelina lived alone in the forest. She plaited herself a bed of blades of grass, and hung it up under

a clover leaf, so that she was sheltered from the rain; she ate honey, and drank the dew from the flowers, which lay fresh on the leaves every morning. Summer and autumn passed away; but then came the long, long winter. All the birds who had sung to her so sweetly had flown away; the flowers and trees lost their leaves; the great clover leaf, under which she stood, shrivelled up and left nothing but a bare stem; her dress was torn, and she was nearly frozen with cold, for she was such a delicate little beauty—poor Thumbelina! It began to snow, and every snow flake was like a large shovelful to her, for we are tall, but she was a very tiny little thing. She rolled herself up in a dried leaf, but it cracked in two, and had no warmth in it. The child shivered with cold.

Close to the wood where she stayed was a large cornfield, but the corn had been cut long ago, and only hard, dry stubble stood up out of the frozen ground. It was like another forest to Thumbelina, and oh, how cold it was! At last she reached the door of a field mouse who lived in a hole under the stubble: it was a warm, comfortable house, and the mouse had a room full of corn, a splendid kitchen, and store-room. Poor little Thumbelina stood in the

THUMBELINA.

doorway like a beggar girl, and begged for a little barley corn, for she had not eaten anything for two days.

“Poor little creature,” said the old mouse, who was at heart very good natured, “come into my warm room and dine with me.” Afterwards, as Thumbelina pleased her, she said, “You can spend the winter with me, as far as I am concerned; you will have to keep my room tidy and tell me stories; I am very fond of hearing them.”

Thumbelina did all the good old mouse required, and was very kindly treated in return for her services.

“We shall have a visitor soon,” said the old mouse. “My neighbour always visits me once a week. He is much better off than I am, and owns large halls, and a fine black velvet fur. If you could only have him for a husband, you would be well provided for. But he cannot see. You must tell him the prettiest story you know.”

But Thumbelina did not mean to trouble herself about any such thing, for she knew who the neighbour was—he was only a mole.

He came and paid a visit in his rich black velvet coat. The old mouse said he was very

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

learned and very rich, his house was twenty times as large as hers. Learned he might be, but he could not bear the sight of the sun or the beautiful flowers, and, never having seen them, he spoke of them slightly.

Thumbelina was obliged to sing, and she sang "Fly away Cockchafer" and "When the priest walks over the field." The mole immediately fell in love with her, because of her beautiful voice ; but he said nothing, for he was a prudent man.

A short time before this visit, he had burrowed a long passage in the earth between the two houses ; and he gave leave to the field mouse and to Thumbelina to walk in it whenever they liked. He also begged them not to be frightened at the dead bird which lay in the passage ; "It was a perfect bird," he said, "with beak and feathers all complete ; it must have died just lately, and been buried where he had made the passage."

The mole then took a piece of decayed wood in his mouth ; it shone like fire in the darkness as he went before them along the gloomy passage. When they came to the dead bird the mole pushed his broad nose through the earth above so as to make a hole. The

THUMBELINA.

daylight fell through and shone on the body of a dead swallow ; the pretty wings were closely folded, the head and claws hidden under the feathers, the poor bird had doubtless died of cold. Thumbelina's little heart ached with pity ; she dearly loved all singing birds, for had they not warbled and trilled to please her all the summer through ? but the mole pushed the bird aside with his crooked legs and said, " He will not chirp again. It must be a pitiable lot to be born a bird. Heaven be praised that that will not befall any of my children ; a bird like this has nothing in the world but his tweet, tweet ! and so he has to die of hunger in the winter."

" Yes, indeed, that is spoken like a sensible man," said the field-mouse. " What does tweet, tweet do for him when the winter comes ? Leaves him to die of hunger, and to perish with cold. And yet it is considered genteel !"

Thumbelina did not speak, but when the others had turned their backs on the dead bird, she stooped down, parted the feathers on the head, and kissed the closed eyes.

" Perhaps it was he who sang so sweetly to me in summer," she said ; " how happy he made me, the poor beautiful bird !"

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

The mole then stopped up the hole that let in the daylight, and escorted the ladies home. But at night Thumbelina could not sleep: she got out of bed and plaited a beautiful large rug of soft hay; when it was finished she took it with some fine flower stamina, as warm and light as cotton, which she had found in the field mouse's sitting room, and ran out to the dead swallow. She laid the stamina carefully round him, spread the coverlet over him so that he might lie warm on the earth.

"Farewell, kind, beautiful bird!" she said. "Farewell, and many thanks for your sweet singing in the summer time, when the trees were green, and the warm sun shone down upon us." She leaned her head against the bird's heart. Now the swallow was not dead, but only numb with cold, and when the warmth stole over him again, his life came back.

For in the autumn the swallows fly away to warmer lands, and if one is late and left behind, the cold seizes it, and it falls down as if it were dead, and lies helpless while the cold snow buries it alive.

Thumbelina trembled with fright, for the bird was very large in comparison with a little

THUMBELINA.

thing an inch long like herself; but she was a brave little maiden, and she folded the warm wraps closer round the bird, and ran to fetch a balsam leaf, which she had used as a coverlet for herself, and that she laid over the bird's head.

The next night she stole out to him again; he was alive, but very weak; he could only just open his eyes and look for a moment at Thumbelina, as she stood over him with a piece of decayed wood—her only lantern—in her hand.

"Thank you, my pretty little maiden," whispered the poor swallow; "I am so beautifully warm now. I shall soon get back my strength, and be able to fly away to the warm sunshine."

"Ah, not yet," she answered; "it is too cold; it snows and freezes. Stay in your warm bed; I will nurse you gladly."

She brought him some water in a leaf, and when he had drunk he told her how he had torn his wing on a thorn bush, and could not keep up with the others; how they flew away without him, and how he fell senseless to the earth. After that he could not remember any more; he did not even know how he had come where he lay then.

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

The swallow stayed there all the winter through, and Thumbelina fed him and waited on him, without saying a word to the mole or the field mouse, because they could not endure birds.

When the spring came, and the sun had warmed the earth, the swallow said good-bye to Thumbelina. She opened the hole which the mole had made. The sunlight poured in gloriously, and the swallow asked her if she would not come with him. He said she might sit on his back, and they could fly into the green wood. But Thumbelina knew it would vex the old field mouse if she were to leave her in that way. "No, I cannot come," she said.

"Farewell, farewell, you good, dear little maiden," said the swallow. He flew away into the warm sunshine. Thumbelina watched him go, and the tears rose in her eyes, for she dearly loved the poor lost bird.

"Tweet, tweet!" sang the swallow, as he flew towards the green-wood. Thumbelina was very sad; she could never get leave to go out into the sunshine; the corn which had been sown in the field above her mistress's house shot up, and looked like a lofty, pathless forest to the little maiden of an inch long.

"You are going to be married now, Thunbe-

THUMBELINA.

lina," said the old mouse. "My neighbour has proposed for you. What a piece of luck it is for a poor girl like you! You must set about making your wedding trousseau now, woollen and linen as well; for nothing must be lacking in the outfit of a mole's bride."

Thumbelina was obliged to sit down to the distaff, and the field-mouse hired four spiders to weave for her day and night. The mole came to pay a visit every evening, and he always said that when the summer was over the sun would not be so hot; as it was, it burned up the ground as hard as a stone. When the summer was over, the mole and Thumbelina were to be married. But she was not at all happy, for she could not bear the tiresome mole. Every morning when the sun rose, and every evening when it set, she went to the door, and when the wind parted the ears of corn, so that she could see the blue sky, she thought how beautiful it was in the light, and longed to see the swallow once again. But he never came again; he must have flown far away in the greenwood.

When autumn came, Thumbelina's outfit was quite finished. "You shall be married in a month," said the field mouse. But Thumbelina

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

lina cried, and said she would not marry the tiresome mole.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said the mouse. "Don't be perverse, or else I shall bite you with my white teeth. He will make you a very handsome husband. The queen herself has not such a black velvet coat. He has kitchen and cellar full; you ought to feel most thankful."

The wedding day arrived. The mole came to fetch Thumbelina; she was to go and live with him deep under the earth, and never come out to see the warm sun, for the mole would not allow that. The poor little thing was very sorrowful; she had obtained leave from the field-mouse to go out, and say good-bye to the beautiful sunlight.

"Farewell, dear golden sun!" she cried, stretching out her arms. She walked a little way through the corn; it had been reaped now, and there was nothing left but the dry stubble. "Farewell, farewell!" she cried. She threw her arms round a little scarlet flower that blossomed near. "Give my love to the swallow if ever you see him," she cried.

"Tweet, tweet!" It sounded high overhead. She looked up; there was the little swallow

THUMBELINA.

just flying by. As soon as he saw Thumbelina he was delighted, and she began to tell him how much she dreaded marrying the stupid mole, and living deep under the earth, where the sun never shone. She could not help crying.

"The cold winter is coming now," said the swallow. "I am going to fly away to warmer countries. Will you come with me? You can sit on my back, and we will fly far away from the ugly mole and his gloomy room; over the mountains to warm lands, where the sun shines brighter than it does here, where there are lovely flowers, and it is always summer. Fly away with me, you sweet little Thumbelina, who saved my life when I lay frozen in the dark vault yonder."

"Yes, I will come," said Thumbelina. She sat down on the bird's back, with her feet resting on his outspread wing; and when she had tied her sash firmly round one of the strongest feathers, the swallow rose high into the air, and flew fast over wood and lake, and over the high mountains crowned with snow. Thumbelina shivered in the cold air, and crept under the bird's warm feathers, peeping out from time to time to look at the beautiful scenery below.

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

At last they came to warmer lands. There the sun shone twice as brightly as it shines here; the sky was twice as high; in the valleys and on the hedgerows grew the most beautiful green and purple grapes; in the woods hung pale lemons and golden oranges; the scent of balsam and myrtle filled the air, and along the highways ran lovely children, playing with large, bright hued butterflies. The swallow flew on and on, and it grew lovelier and lovelier. Under the tall, stately trees, by the purple lake, stood an ancient castle of pure, white marble. Vine leaves twined round the stainless columns; among these were many swallows' nests, and in one of the nests lived the swallow who carried Thumbelina.

"Here is my house," said the swallow. "But it is not fit that you should live there; my arrangements will not permit of your being satisfied with it. Choose out one of the most beautiful flowers that grow down yonder; I will fly with you to it, and you can live as happy as the day is long."

"That will be glorious," she said, clapping her little hands.

Down below lay a great white marble column which had fallen to the earth, and was broken

THUMBELINA.

in three pieces : among the ruins grew the loveliest white flowers. The swallow flew down with Thumbelina, and placed her on one of the broad leaves. But what a surprise awaited her ! In the midst of the flower sat a little elf as white and transparent as glass ; on his head was a golden crown, brilliant wings fell from his shoulders, and he was scarcely taller than Thumbelina. He was the elf of the flower : there was one in every blossom, an elf man or an elf maid, but he was the elfin king.

“ Oh, how handsome he is ! ” cried Thumbelina to the swallow.

The elfin prince was terribly frightened at the swallow, for it was a giant bird in comparison with him ; but when he saw Thumbelina he was enraptured ; she was the prettiest girl he had ever seen. He took off his golden crown and placed it on her hair, asked her her name, and begged her to become his bride. If she would consent he told her that she should be queen of all the flowers. Now this was certainly a very different kind of husband from the toad's son, and the mole with the black velvet fur ; and Thumbelina said yes to the handsome prince. And out of every flower came the elfin men and maidens ; all delicate and beautiful to look upon.

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

All of them brought Thumbelina a present, but the best of all was a pair of lovely white wings, which were fastened on her shoulders, so that she could fly from flower to flower. Then there were great rejoicings: the little swallow sat overhead in his nest, and had to sing the wedding song. He sang it as well as ever he could, but he was sad at heart, for he loved Thumbelina, and had hoped never to part from her.

"Farewell, farewell!" sang the swallow, with a sorrowful voice, as he left the warm countries and flew away to Denmark. He has a nest there, outside the window of a man who can tell fairy tales: to him he sang "Tweet, tweet," and that is how we learned the whole story.

Everything in its Right Place.

IT was hundreds of years ago.

Behind the wood, on the shores of the wide lake, stood an old baronial hall, and all around it ran a deep moat where sedge and reeds grew rank. Close to the drawbridge

by the entrance gate was an old willow that bent above the sedge.

The tramp of horse and sound of horns rose from the pass below, and the little maid who minded the geese hurriedly drove her flock from the bridge as the hunt galloped up ; it was so near at hand that she had only just time to spring on to the high parapet of the bridge to prevent herself from being ridden over. Scarcely more than a child as yet, she had a slender, girlish figure, a sweet true-hearted look in her face, and clear, lovely eyes ; but the baron saw in her neither charm nor grace. As he galloped by he lowered his hunting-whip and, thrusting the butt end of it against her breast, he pushed her backwards from the bridge.

"Everything in its right place," he cried, in his brutal merriment ; "into the swamp with you." That was his notion of wit, and all his followers joined in his loud laughter, the huntsmen shouted and swore, the hounds bayed in chorus.

The poor child caught at a branch of the old willow-tree to stay her fall, and for awhile she managed to support herself above the swamp ; when the huntsmen and the dogs had disap-

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

peared through the castle gates she tried to lift herself up, but the branch snapped off from the tree, and she would have fallen helplessly into the marsh had not a strong arm from above seized and rescued her. It was the arm of a



wandering pedler who had watched the scene from a little distance, and hurried to the rescue.

“Everything in its right place,” he said after the noble baron, as he drew the girl safely to

the land. He tried to replace the broken bough where it had stood before, but—"everything in its right place"—it would not fit, so he planted it in the moist earth. "Grow and thrive if you can, and bring forth a flute for the people at the castle yonder," he said, for he would gladly have played the Rogue's March to His Excellency the baron and to all his noble kith and kin. Then he went on his way to the castle—not into the great hall of course, he was of too low degree for that—but into the servants' hall, and the maids and valets looked over his wares and chaffered with him. From the dining-room above, came the sound of frantic revelry; the guests were supposed to be singing, and they certainly did their best. Loud laughter, blended with the baying of the hounds, came through the open window: all was riot and drunkenness; wine and strong ale foamed in the horns and goblets; the dogs shared the repast, and every now and then some roistering squire would stoop to caress the four-footed favourites.

The pedler was sent for, but only that he might serve as their laughing stock. The wine had got into every head and driven out every gleam of sense and reason; the guests poured

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

ale into a stocking for the pedler to drink quickly; that was considered sparkling wit, and brought forth ready laughter; herds of cattle, serfs, and tenant farms were staked on a throw of the dice and gambled away.

"Everything in its right place," repeated the pedler, as he escaped safe at last from the new Sodom and Gomorrha, as he called the place; "Here, on the open highway, is *my* place—I was certainly out of place up there." The little girl who kept the geese nodded to him smiling, as he went on his way.

Days and weeks passed by, and it was seen that the broken willow branch which the pedler had planted by the castle moat, was still fresh and green; nay, that it even put out two fresh shoots: the little girl stopped to look at it as she drove her geese; it had evidently taken root, and the child was glad, for she looked upon it as her own tree.

And the tree certainly thrived and shot upward; but everything else belonging to the castle was brought steadily down by rioting and high play, for no house can stand secure on those foundations.

Before six years were past, the castle was sold to a rich tradesman, and the baron

wandered out from his ancestral halls with a beggar's staff in his hand. The tradesman was no other than the poor pedler to whom the master of the house had given ale in a stocking ; but honesty and industry bring wealth and honour, and now the pedler was lord of the castle. From that day a pack of cards was not allowed within the walls. "Cards are the devil's books," said the new master; "when the devil first saw the Bible he set about making a pack of cards to have something to set against it." The new proprietor married, and whom else should he marry but the little maid whose life he had saved on the bridge ; she had grown up pious and gentle, and in her new dress she looked as beautiful as a young lady of rank. How did it all happen ? Oh ! but that is too long a story for these busy days ; it *did* happen, and that is the most important.

Everything was ordered wisely and well in the castle now ; the master watched over the out-door duties, the mistress looked to all within, and a blessing seemed to fall on both. Wealth attracts wealth ; and the old castle was repaired and beautified ; the moat was cleared out and fruit trees planted in its place ; all was bright and homelike, and as clean as a pink. In the

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

long winter evenings the mistress sat among



her maids at the spinning-wheel in the great

hall, on Sundays the Bible was read aloud by the justice himself—the pedler in his old age had been made a magistrate.

Children and grandchildren were born and grew up ; all of them received a good education, but all were by no means equally clever—and that is the case in many families. Meanwhile the broken bough by the bridge had grown into a splendid tree. “*That* is our genealogical tree,” the two old people used to say ; “that willow must be honoured and preserved,” they said to the children, and those who had not any brains to spare heard them.

A hundred years passed by.

We are come now to our own day: the lake has changed into a moor; the ancient castle has disappeared, a pool of water by a few crumbling stones is all that remains of the bridge; and by them there stands a stately old tree with hanging branches—it was the genealogical tree; and it stands still, and shows how beautiful a willow can be when it is left to itself. The trunk was cleft asunder from the root to the branches; the storms had bent it a little, but it still stood there, and out of every crack and rift where the wind had carried a sprinkling of earth grew flowers and waving

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

grasses, while overhead between the branches was a perfect hanging garden of flowering bramble and wild raspberry; nay, even a tiny mistletoe had taken root in it, and stood out bright and clear against the knotty trunk; and the old tree mirrored itself in the water whenever the wind drove the duckweed into a far corner of the pond. A field path led close by the tree.

On the wooded height with the beautiful view stood the modern manor house, large and stately, with such clear glass panes that it seemed as if no glass were there at all. The terraced steps which led to the entrance were framed with roses and exotics. The lawn was as soft and velvety as if each separate blade of grass were trimmed night and morning. In the rooms were priceless pictures, velvet and brocaded sofas and fauteuils, marble tables, numberless books bound in rare bindings; everything bespoke the dwelling place of wealthy people, for this was the seat of the baron and his family.

The place corresponded with the people. Everything in its right place, was the motto of the house; and therefore all the old paintings, which had been looked upon with reverence in

the former castle, were now hung in the corridor that led to the servants' rooms, and considered mere lumber; especially two portraits—one of a man, in a claret-coloured coat and tie wig, and the other of a lady, with powdered hair, and holding a rose in her hand; both of them surrounded with a wreath of willow. These two portraits showed many a rent and tear, because the baron's little son used to set them up for a target for his arrows: they were the likenesses of the justice and his wife, the founders of the family.

“But they do not really belong to our family,” said the children: “he was a pedler, and she kept geese. They were not like papa and mamma.”

The son of the village pastor was tutor at the castle; and one day he went out walking with the two boys and their elder sister, who had lately been confirmed. Their path lay close to the old willow by the bridge, and as they walked the sister plaited wreaths of field flowers; everything in its right place, so that the wreath made one beautiful whole. Meanwhile she could hear quite well all that was said; and she liked to hear the pastor's son speak of the powers of nature, or relate the story of heroic men and

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

women : she was herself a fine character, noble in thought and will, and with a heart that beat with love towards everything that God has created. They lingered by the old willow, for the youngest of the children insisted on having a flute cut for him out of the old willow-tree—he had had them cut out of other willows, and the tutor broke off a small branch.

“Oh, do not do that!” said the young lady ; but she spoke too late. “That is our famous old tree, and I love it dearly. They laugh at me at home about it, but I do not mind that. There is a legend belonging to this willow-tree.”

And then she related what we know already : the story of the tree, of the old castle, of the pedler, and the girl who kept the geese : how they met each other for the first time at the bridge, and afterwards became the founders of the present family.

“They would never accept any patent of nobility, the dear old people,” she said. “Their motto was, ‘Everything in its place,’ and they thought that would not be the case if they purchased a title with money. My grandfather, who afterwards took the title of baron, was their son. They say he was a very scholarly

man, and well received by princes and princesses at the Court festivals. He is the favourite at home; but I do not know how it is, there seems to me something about that old couple which draws my heart to them. How homelike, how patriarchal, it must have been at the old house, when the mistress sat at the spinning wheel among her maids, and the master read aloud out of the Bible!

“They must have been delightful and sensible people,” said the tutor; and then the conversation turned, almost of itself, on titled and untitled folk. To hear the pastor’s son speak of nobility, one would scarcely have thought he belonged to an inferior class.

“It is a happiness to belong to a family which has distinguished itself, and so to receive a spur and impulse towards all that is noble. It is a happiness to possess a family name which serves as a card of introduction into the best circles. Nobility means nobleness: it is a gold coin stamped with the impress of its own worth. The present tone of thought—a tone which many poets echo instinctively—is that everything belonging to high rank is mean and base; while the lower one descends in the social scale the more lofty and exalted one finds

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

everything. But that is not my opinion, for it is false. In the higher classes one finds many touchingly beautiful traits; I could mention several, but this is one my mother told me. She was visiting at the house of a person of rank in the town: my grandmother had, I believe, acted as foster mother to the dowager countess. My mother and the noble lord were alone in the room, when the latter saw in the courtyard below a poor cripple who used to come every Sunday on her crutches to receive a weekly gift. 'There is that poor old woman,' said the nobleman; 'walking is so painful for her,' and before my mother had time to take in the sense of his words he had rushed out of the room and run downstairs to save the old woman the trouble of coming to fetch the customary bounty. It was but a slight action, but, like the gift of the poor widow in the Bible, it strikes a chord that re-echoes in the depth of every human heart; and it is to that depth that the poet ought to appeal, especially in our own days, where what is wanted is to soften and to appease. But when a sprig of humanity, because he is of noble birth and possesses a genealogical tree, rears and neighs in the street like an Arab steed, or says of a

house where commoners are received, 'One meets there people out of the gutter'—then one sees nobility in its corruption and decay—worn as a mask such as Thespis made of old, and the world makes merry when the wearer is pierced through with the shafts of ridicule."

That was what the tutor said; it was rather a long speech, but meanwhile the flute was cut out.

The castle was filled with visitors; guests from the country, and from the capital; ladies dressed with or without taste; the large reception-rooms were crowded. The neighbouring pastors stood in a deferential group in one corner; it looked rather like a funeral, but it was really an entertainment, only the amusement had scarcely begun yet.

There was to be an amateur concert, and the baron's youngest child brought in his flute cut out of the old willow-tree; but as neither he nor his father could bring a note out of it, it was not of much use. However, there was plenty of music and singing, chiefly of the kind that is liked best by the performers, but in other respects charming.

"You are a virtuoso," said a baronet—the son of his father—to the tutor. "You can

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

make a flute and then play on it; that is true genius, and deserves all homage. One is obliged now to advance with the times. You will delight us by an air on your little instrument—will you not?" With these words he presented the pastor's son with the flute that was cut out of the old willow by the pool, and announced loudly that the tutor was going to play a solo on the flute.

It was easy to see that it was done to bring him into ridicule, and the tutor refused to play, although he was a fine player; but every one pressed and urged him so vehemently that at last he raised the flute to his lips.

It was a wonderful flute. One tone—shriller and louder than the whistle of a steam-engine—sounded far and wide over courtyard, garden, and woodlands; far into the country round for miles away; with it came a storm wind that roared aloud, "Everything in its right place,"—and away flew His Excellency the baron on the wings of the wind into the hut of a poor shepherd, and the shepherd flew—not into the hall, he could not get so far as that, but into the lobby among the smart serving men who strutted up and down in their fine liveries; and were paralysed at the mere thought of such

EVERYTHING IN ITS RIGHT PLACE.

a person's sitting down to table with them. But within the hall, the young baroness flew to the seat of honour at the head of the table, and the pastor's son sat by her; they looked like a bridal pair. An old count, a scion of one of the oldest families in the land, remained untouched in his place of honour, for the flute was just, and so one ought to be. The amiable and witty baronet who had set the flute going, and who was the son of his father, flew head over heels into the hencoop, but not alone.

The flute was heard miles away, and the most singular things occurred: a rich banker's family who kept a carriage and four was blown out of the carriage, and could not even find room behind: two rich farmers who have shot up above their own corn-field in our own day, were dashed down into the ditch. It was a dangerous flute; luckily it split in two at the first note, and that was a good thing; for it was immediately put in the player's pocket—"Everything in its right place."

The following day not a word was said about what had happened; and that is what people mean by pocketing the flute. Everything had resumed its original position; only that the two old portraits of the pedler and the poor

girl were left hanging on the wall of the great hall whither the flute had blown them; and since a connoisseur declared that they were painted by a master's hand, they were cleaned and restored. Everything in its right place—yes, and it will get there too. Eternity is long—longer than this story.

The Little Match-girl.

NEW Year's eve was come, with bitter cold grey dusk and falling snow. Through the gathering darkness a little child, bare-headed and poorly clad, pattered down the frozen streets with naked feet. When she left home she had on a pair of shoes, but they were of no use to her, for they were so large that her mother had worn them, and the child could not keep them on her feet. She had lost them as she ran across the street in terror, to escape being run over by the carriages rolling quickly over the noiseless snow. One shoe was lost in the snow, the other was picked up by a street boy, who ran off with it. The child went on with naked feet, red and aching

SHE LITTLE MATCH-GIRL.

with the bitter cold. Her apron was filled with lucifer-matches, and she held a bundle of them in one hand ; but no one had bought any the whole day through ; not even a pennyworth.

Shivering with cold and hunger, the poor little thing looked the picture of misery.

Snowflakes hung on her long fair hair, but she did not heed them ; bright lights shone from the windows, and from every house came the smell of roast goose, for it was New Year's Eve. That was what she was thinking of.

In an angle formed by two houses, one of which stood rather in front of the other, she cowered down on the frozen ground ; she drew her little feet under her, but it was freezing hard. Home she dared not go, for she had not sold a single match, and her father would beat her cruelly ; besides, it was as cold at home : there was only the roof over them, and the keen wind whistled through even when the largest holes were stuffed with straw and rags.

Her little hands were almost frozen. Ah ! perhaps a match would warm her just a little, if she took one from the bundle, struck it against the wall, and tried to warm her fingers ! She drew one out. P-r-r-r-r-r ! how it fizzed and flamed ! It was a bright warm light, like a little

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

candle, as she held her hands over it: a wonderful light. It seemed to the child as if she were sitting in front of a bright fire, with polished brass fender and fire-irons: how the fire blazed and crackled—how the warmth came out towards her! She stretched out her little feet to warm them also, but in a second the match was out—the fire had vanished, and only the blackened end of the match was left in her hand.

She struck a second match against the wall; it flamed out and the wall grew as transparent as a veil. The child looked into the room and saw a table splendidly laid: rare porcelain dishes stood on the snow-white cloth, and a large roast goose smoked at the head of the table, with apple-sauce near it, and dried fruits. And what was better still, the goose hopped off the dish and came waddling along the floor to the little girl, with a knife and fork stuck right in its breast. It had almost reached her when the match went out, and left only the bare, damp wall behind. She lit another match;—and lo! she was sitting under a brilliant Christmas-tree, taller and more beautiful than the one she had seen through the glass doors of the rich merchant's house.

THE LITTLE MATCH-GIRL.

Myriads of tapers shone from the green branches, and bright pictures, such as she had seen in the shop windows, looked down upon her. The child stretched out her hands—but the match went out. The tapers rose higher and higher through the frozen air; at last they glimmered overhead like stars in the sky, and one fell, leaving as it went a long streak of fire.

“Some one is dying now,” said the child, for her old grandmother, the only one who had ever been fond of her, and who was now dead herself, had told her that whenever a star shoots, a soul flies up to God.

The child struck another match, and in its light she saw her dead grandmother, glorious and radiant to look upon, and smiling tenderly in the child’s upturned face.

“Grandmother!” cried the little one, “oh! take me with you. I know you will vanish when the match goes out; you will go away like the bright fire, and the goose, and the beautiful Christmas-tree!” She struck her whole bundle of matches quickly, for she wanted to hold her grandmother fast. And the matches burned with such a brilliant flame that all around grew clear as day; her grandmother had never before looked so tall and beautiful:

ANDERSEN'S TALES.

she lifted the child into her arms and both of them flew away radiant with happiness, far above the earth, higher and higher to the land where there is neither hunger, cold, nor sorrow—to the presence of God.

In the chill early dawn the little girl was found, cowering against the wall, frozen to death, on the happy New Year's Eve. A bright sunlight shone down on her face, tinged her pale cheeks with red, and kissed her smiling lips. Motionless she sat there holding her matches; one bundle of them was burnt away. "She must have tried to warm herself," they said. No one dreamed of all the beautiful things she had seen, or in what glorious light her grandmother had come to carry her away to her New Year's peace and joy.

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